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From the Forum.

Postcard from an American sailor on the USS *Brooklyn* in Vladivostok 19 days after the Bolshevik revolution. Franked with 9 kopecks in Russian stamps which overpaid the international postage by 1 kopeck. However, the card was not entrusted to the Russian post. Instead a 4 sen Japanese stamp was affixed which paid the Japanese international postage. The Japanese stamp was cancelled in Yokohama on 1st December.. This is the earliest known mail from American forces in Russia. The *Brooklyn* arrived in Vladivostok on 23rd November and left on 11th December.



Message headed 26 November 1917, U. S. S. *Brooklyn*:

"I wrote you a letter yesterday while ashore. You may have to pay some postage on it as I didn't know how much stamps to put on it. I had a ride in a Russian carriage which is called 'isvostchick.' I had a Russian with me yesterday for interpreter, and he came over and visited the ship today. I may go see him tomorrow and take an auto ride. Many visitors aboard today. I go in the office tomorrow as log room messenger (strikes for yeo.). Lovingly, T."

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Editorial

I bring to you a bumper 60 page edition which hopefully in these difficult times will go some way towards compensating for cancellation of our meetings and indeed many other philatelic and non-philatelic events which we've all experienced recently. Quite a few I know have been logging onto the forum and contributing to the "Cover of the Day" topic started by Peter Harvey. I'd encourage all to log on if possible. This edition sees the 75th Anniversary of the conclusion of WW II in Europe. A major article I've held over with bring poignancy to the conclusion of War in the Far East in the Autumn Journal. As always, Articles are welcomed. Front Cover illustration Courtesy of Howard L. Weinert

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HMS *E5*

Colin Tabeart

One of the early E-Class boats, *E5* was commissioned on 28 June 1913. Twenty days before commissioning she suffered an explosion in the engine room that resulted in 13 deaths. A further engine room disaster whilst on sea trials killed three more and injured another ten. Not an auspicious beginning.

At the beginning of the war she was assigned to patrol at the eastern end of the English Channel to protect the troopships conveying the British Expeditionary Force to France. Subsequently she operated from Harwich, patrolling primarily in the North Sea. In Sep 1915 she torpedoed the German minelayer *SP11*, which was subsequently written off.

In Feb 1916 she refuelled from HMS *Maidstone*, the submarine depot ship at Harwich, and left on 4 March with three other boats to patrol off Heligoland. She failed to return, being lost with all 29 hands, the reason and precise date of her loss is not known.



Reverse of cover.

The cover shown above, addressed to “Mr AR Owen, HM Submarine E5”, was posted at Portsmouth on an indeterminate date, and received at Harwich on 13 April, by which time she was certainly lost. Stamped on the back UNDELIVERED FOR REASON NOTED/RETURN TO SENDER, with the comment “Not on Commission”. Top left of the front, in red ink, is “Returned from SNO for return”, SNO standing for Senior Naval Officer. The letter reached the Dead Letter Office in London on 15 Apr.

Daily Mail, Monday, November 21, 2016

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The missing submarine: The E5, with her name marked at the front and her identifying pennant number of 85 on the conning tower, vanished during a rescue mission

Found, the WWI sub that took 29 men to their doom

Maritime mystery finally solved 100 years on

By James Tozer

FOR 100 years it has kept its secrets, lying almost forgotten on the seabed.

The first British submarine to fire a torpedo in the First World War vanished in 1916. But now the descendants of the 29 brave crewmen who died at last know its fate.

Divers found the remarkably intact hull of HMS E5 off the coast of Netherlands after securing agreement for a brief suspension of the busy shipping lane beneath which it has rested.

Built in Barrow-in-Furness and commissioned in 1913, HMS E5 – the Royal Navy didn't start naming its submarines until 1942 – was feared to have struck a mine while rescuing survivors from a stricken trawler near Helligoland Bight on March 7, 1916.

Its resting place remained a mystery until amateur maritime archaeologists won permission to examine a wreck off Schiermonnikoog, near the German border. Encrusted with limpets and barnacles, it proved to be that of the 178ft E5, its hatches open in a poignant indication that its crew made a vain effort to escape.

Its conning tower, which once bore its identifying 'pennant number' of 85, lay nearby on the seabed but there was no sign of major damage to the hull, indicating that it was not sunk as a result of enemy action.

Remy Lutik, who led the Zeester diving team, said: 'A piece of the puzzle of the maritime history of the North Sea has surfaced. The results offer hope for relatives looking for their missing loved ones.'

Among the crew who lost their lives was Stoker Petty Officer Francis Garrett Cowburn whose grandson, Malcolm Eckersley, now 80,

continues to mark its sinking every year along with his family.

His son – SPO Cowburn's great grandson – Richard, a council licensing officer, learnt the wreck had been found in a chance conversation with a colleague who is an advanced underwater diver.

'I couldn't believe that after a century my family would finally be able to close the chapter on just what had happened to Francis,' said the 51-year-old, from Saddleworth, Greater Manchester. 'It's remained a family mystery and source of sadness and intrigue.'

Born in 1885, Stoker Cowburn joined the Navy in 1905 and entered the pioneering submarine service

four years later. The Daily Mail has now traced other relatives, including the grandson of Petty Officer Arthur Robert Owen, from Battersea, South London, who shares his name. Retired insurance broker Mr

'No other grave than the sea'

Owen, who is known as Robert and is now 74, said: 'No one ever knew what happened to it – the submarine just vanished.'

'My grandfather joined the Navy when he was just 12, and switched to serving on submarines because

the pay was better than on the surface. It's extraordinary that it's been found 100 years later.'

Also among those lost was Engine Room Artificer Cecil Rice, 28, a father of two from Peterborough whose daughter Mary is now 104 and living in the US.

Wendy Christensen, 82, the daughter of his son Norman, said of her grandfather: 'Until now, he had no other grave than the sea. I've been to the naval memorial at Chatham where his name is listed, so it's fantastic to know his submarine has finally been found.'

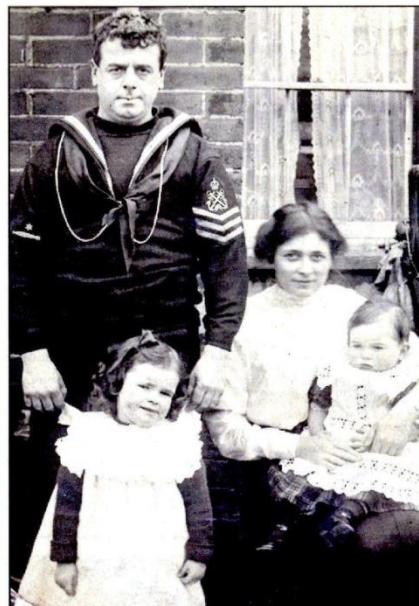
Leading Seaman John 'Tommy' Bassett, 33, had completed 17 years' Naval service and was work-

ing as a postman in Walsall when he was called up as a reservist only six weeks after getting married.

'He needn't have been on board – it's so tragic,' said Anne Thorpe, a cousin who has researched her ancestor. 'It makes everything seem so close knowing where his submarine now lies.'

'My father never spoke about what happened so it had always been a bit of a mystery.'

Martijn Manders, programme manager of maritime heritage for the Dutch government, said he hoped that by working with dive groups the resting places of more vessels could now be discovered.



Lost: Petty Officer Arthur Robert Owen, pictured with his family

The wreck was found in November 2016. The *Daily Mail* article that appeared in the paper on 21 November is reproduced above by kind permission of the newspaper, and remains their copyright. Amazingly the family photo the paper chose to use shows the addressee of the letter, with his family. Petty Officer Arthur Robert Owen shows his three good conduct badges and the crossed anchors of his rating on his left arm, whilst his right arm shows the badge of a Petty Officer, Torpedo. This suggests he was the senior rating in charge of the boat's 4 torpedo tubes.

The article says there was no sign of major damage to the hull, suggesting that she was not lost due to enemy action or minefield, but it only takes a very small hole in the pressure hull of a submarine to sink her. The hatches were open when the divers found her, suggesting that she may have been on the surface rescuing survivors when disaster struck, as some reports say, or that an escape attempt was made after she sank.

199878

Portsmouth

199878

Name
in full

Arthur Robert Owen

Date of Birth 12 May 1883

Place of Birth Battersea, London

Occupation Grand Boy.

Date and Period of C. S. Engagements.

Age.

Height.
Ft. in.

Hair.

Eyes.

Complexion.

Wounds, Scars, Marks, &c.

12 May 1901 - 12 yrs

76

5:11

Dk Brn

Brn

Flesh

12 May 1913 - to comp

✓

5:7

"

"

"

Vol 145/13

Ship, &c., served in.

List and
No.

Rating.

Sub-ratings.

Rating.

From

To

Badges.

Period of Service.

From

To

Character.

If Discharged, Whither,
and for what Cause.

Impregnable

150 1631

222

S In

176.4.22

25.1.13

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

Minotaur

150 1631

222

S In

176.4.22

25.1.13

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

Mars

150 1631

222

S In

176.4.22

25.1.13

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

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17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

Mars

150 1631

222

S In

176.4.22

25.1.13

17.6.06

17.6.06

17.6.06

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17.6.06

17.6.06

Above is Owen's Service Certificate, courtesy of the National Archives. It shows that he joined the RN as a Boy, 2nd Class, being promoted to Boy 1st Class in 1899. He went to the submarine depot ship *Arrogant* in 1911, but probably did not join submarines until sent for courses in 1912 at HMS *Dolphin*, followed by service as a Petty Officer with the depot ships *Vulcan*, *Alecto*, *Forth*, *Vulcan*, and finally *Maidstone* (at Harwich) from 25 Nov 1915. Although nominally on the books of the various depot ships he probably served in one of the submarines of their respective flotillas; submarines themselves were not even mentioned in Navy Lists until 1919.

Throughout his career his conduct is noted as “VG”, the highest grade, and his competence usually as “Sup” for Superior, also the highest attainable. To the bottom right is the chilling endorsement “DD (Discharged Dead) 11 March 1916. Lost in Sub E5.”

Kinmel Park Military Camp and the riot of 1919¹

Alan Spencer

At the outbreak of World War 1 Canada's army consisted of 3,110 militia i.e. Territorials. Within six weeks it had built a new military camp at Valcartier near Quebec, assembled an army of some 33,000 troops and embarked them on the high seas to England. On arrival these raw recruits needed training, and this took place on Salisbury Plain (*figure 1*) which had been a British military training area since 1898. As the war progressed additional facilities were established at numerous locations throughout Britain.



Figure: 1. A group of Canadian NCO's from the Canadian Field Artillery on Salisbury Plain.

During November 1914 arrangements were made for the building of a large military training camp at Kinmel Park near Rhyl in North Wales. It was originally intended only for the training of the Welsh Army Corps but by late July 1915 it was realised that it was to be permanent for the foreseeable future, accommodating some 18-20,000 troops drawn from all over the country.

The camp complex comprised a number of sub-camps with their own canteens and messes. Each sub-camp comprised of men from different regions e.g. M.D.1 was the designation for Camp 20 which housed men from Western Ontario. In addition, there was a small hospital, bakery, theatre, a Wesleyan Free Church, a Salvation Army and three YMCA buildings. Also, a collection of shops, which gained the nickname of 'Tin Town', began to be set up near the main

¹ References

The Kinmel Park Camp Riots by Julian Putkowski published by the Flintshire Historical Society 1989

The Story of Kinmel Park Military Training Camp 1914 to 1918 by Robert H. Griffiths published by Gwasg Carreg Gwalch 2014

<https://rhylhistoryclub.wordpress.com/2016/04/24/kinmel-park-camp/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/wales/entries/cfb526c8-186d-3afe-b3e0-095c8898f868>

gate. By 1916 a Post Office had been established comprising of two officers and five staff (*figure 2*).

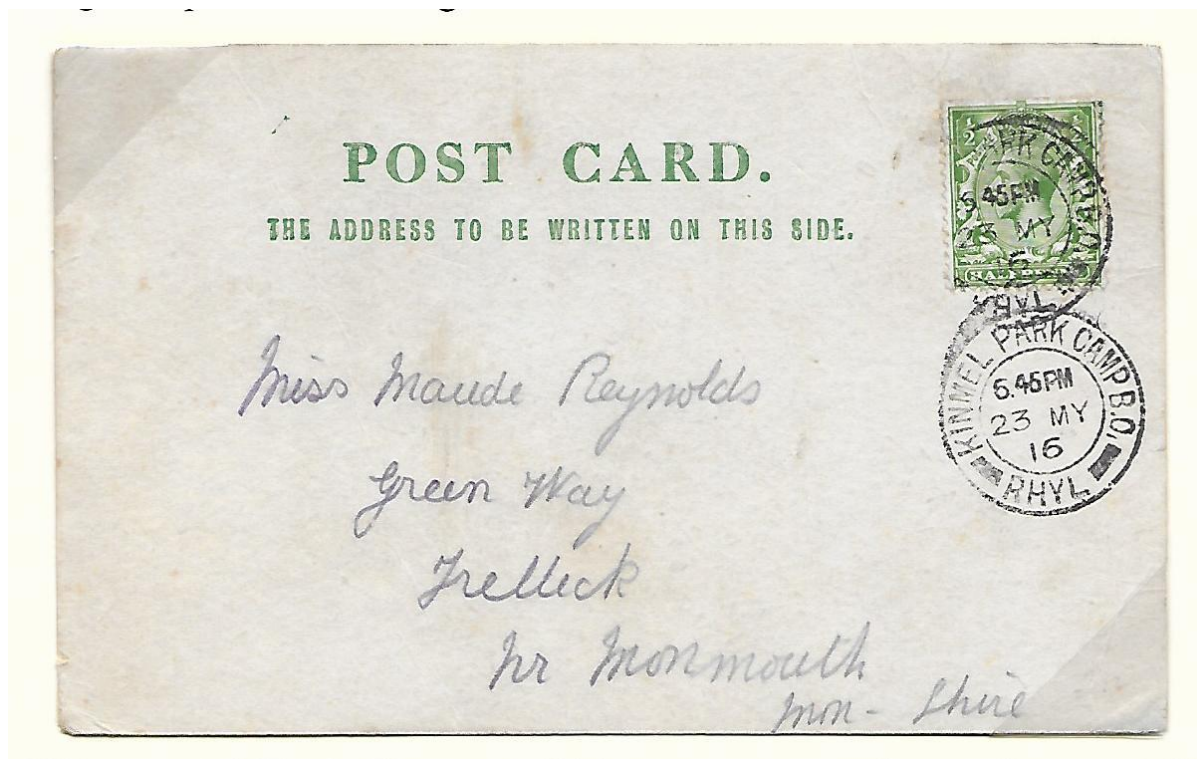


Figure: 2. A Post Card from 'c/o Guard Room No. 2 Camp' includes a rather intriguing message – “W. Pope is coming up tonight and we hope to see him, he has not been arrested yet.”

Conditions in the camp, however, received unfavourable reviews from some of the troops stationed there, including comments such as “We are in still in this vile place...” and “We are anxious to get out of here...”. These views were reflected in a post card, dated July 1919, with a printed poem, the first verse of which demonstrates the soldiers dark humour: -

There's a, isolated, desolated spot I'd like to mention,
Where all you hear is “Stand at Ease,” “Slope Arms,”
“Quick March,” “Attention,”
It's miles away from anywhere, by God, it is a rum 'un,
A chap lived there for fifty years and never saw a woman.

The sender had added “No idea what this sunny spot is really like.”, suggesting that they had been subjected to a good dose of Welsh rain.

As part of the process of repatriating the Canadian Expeditionary Force home troop concentration camps were set up at Whitley, Bramshott, Buxton, Seaford, Ripon and Kinmel Park. But from Armistice Day onwards there was trouble almost every day at Kinmel park between the Canadian troops (15 – 20,000 at any one time) and British troops who were there to maintain order within the camp.

**Figure: 1.**

A Post Card dated 5th August 1918 to Preston, Lancs. Showing the main Camp road.

Huts that had formally held 30 men now had to accommodate about 42, requiring some of them to sleep on the floor. The

harsh winter caused a bitterly cold wind to blow through the camp and the standard of food deteriorated and was described as "little better than pigswill." It was feared that there would be few jobs available to the returning troops in Canada. It was against this background that an advance in army pay was promptly spent on alcohol in nearby Rhyl or in one of the 'wet' canteens.

Soldiers awaiting repatriation battled against boredom. To sustain morale and discipline, the military promoted physical training programs, organised sports and a wide range of recreational facilities. It also expanded the Khaki University, first established in 1917, to offer elementary to university level courses to idle troops. Some 50,000 Canadians took part in this pioneering education program that prepared veterans for post-war life and occupied leisure time while they

waited for shipping berths to take them home.



"Tin Town" after the rioting, March 5th, 1919

Figure: 3A.

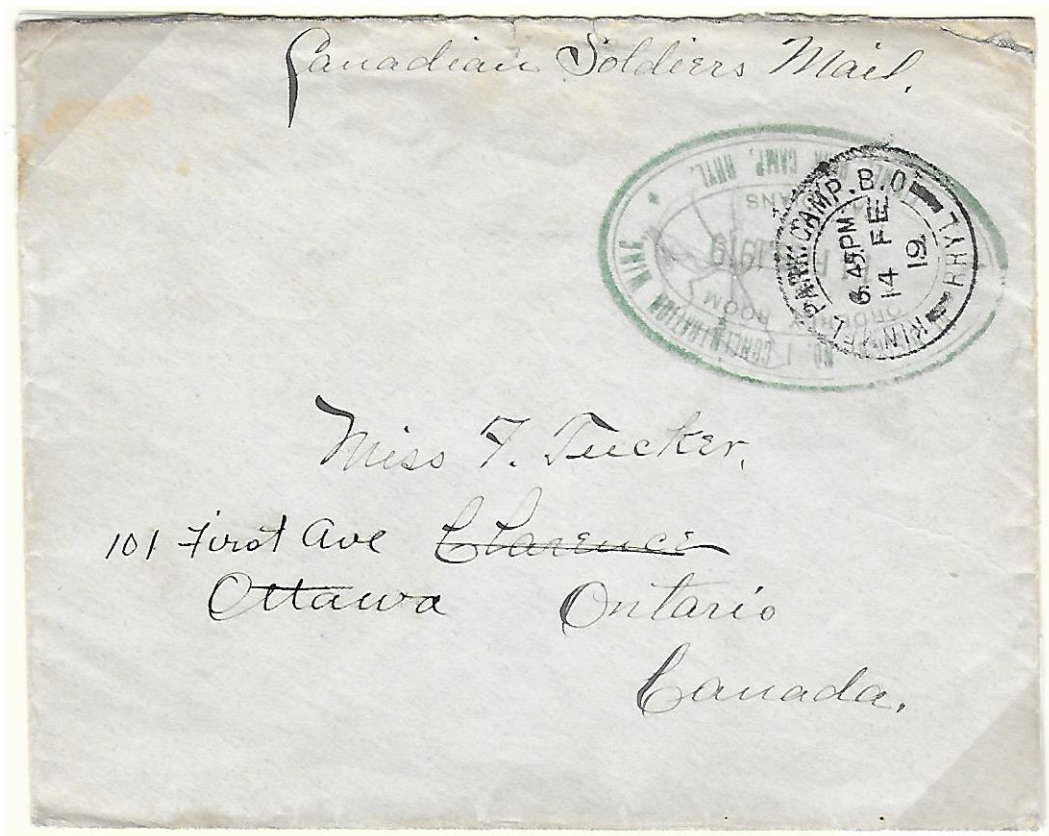


Figure: 2.

Figure: 4. Shows an envelope, dated 14th February (St. Valentine's Day) 1919 with a manuscript endorsement "Canadian Soldiers Mail". On the front it has a cachet in green for the Orderly Room, Number 1 Concentration Wing which housed men from New Brunswick. The cachet has been over-stamped with a 'Kinmel Park B. O.' handstamp. On arrival in Canada this envelope was back-stamped at Clarence, Ontario, before being redirected to Ottawa. Whilst troops took no active part in the riots that followed, the men of Camp 1 (apart from the officers) did little to resist them.

The shortage of adequate ships was a problem for those responsible for bringing the troops home and a scandal arose over the *S. S. Northland* made things worse. In December 1918 returning troops got off the ship at Halifax, Nova Scotia, complaining bitterly of conditions during the crossing. Word of this got back to those still awaiting repatriation.

One of those awaiting repatriation was Thomas Hindle, a Manchester born machinist who had enlisted in January 1916 in the 166th Battalion, Nova Scotia Rifles. On 5th September 1918 he had been admitted to No. 4 General Hospital, Camiers in the Pas-de-Calaise with a gunshot wound to his right leg.

On a picture post card of Rhyl, dated during early December 1918, he indicated that he was "...stationed here for a few days before leaving for Canada...". He set sail on 15th December in the *S. S. Regina*. At the time of writing he was unaware that his wife, Margaret, has died towards the end of November.

In January 1919 the parents of Sapper Duncan Livingston Scott wrote to him (*figure 5*), no doubt anxiously awaiting his safe return. He had been a victim of the influenza epidemic in December 1918 and had also spent some time in No. 4 General Hospital, Camiers. Often referred to as 'Spanish Flu' the epidemic had swept around the world in 1918 killing an estimated 50 million people, more than any other illness in recorded history. In January 1919, however, he was well enough to be returned to Britain and was subsequently repatriated on 30th March 1919 to Canada from Glasgow on the *S. S. Saturnia*.

Scott had enlisted in the 1st Depot Battalion Western Ontario Regiment, at Sarnia, Ontario as a result of the 1917 Military Service Act which introduced conscription in Canada. He was a single man, 30 years of age and a tin-smith and plumber by trade.



Figure: 3.

The 3 cents postage rate was made up 2 cents postage plus 1 cent War Tax. Originally sent to the Army Post Office in London where it was forwarded to the Military Camp in Seaford. It has been endorsed accordingly in manuscript but on arrival there a red boxed '**PROCEED TO/M.D.I./CANADA**' handstamp was applied indicating that he had been transferred to Kinmel Park in preparation for repatriation.

By the middle of February one soldier was writing home that he "...expects to quit for Canada in a few days...." But during the month the situation in the camp gradually deteriorated. Ships had been allotted to the Canadians for up to 50,000 departures per month, but some of the first vessels available, such as the *S. S. Northland*, were far from adequate. The total number of berths was further diminished as a number of ships which had been requisitioned during the war were returned to their owners and accommodation on some vessels were being allocated to civilians.

A further difficulty was the capacity of Canadian ports and railways to handle the influx of people. The railways could initially promise only 25,000 spaces per month, exactly half the number of soldiers expected to arrive. St. John and Halifax were the only large, ice-free Canadian ports, and the latter was still rebuilding from a massive explosion the previous year that had

destroyed most dockside facilities. Unemployment in Canada had also risen sharply, especially in Toronto and Montreal.

News of the third postponement of the 2,120-passenger capacity liner *S. S. Haverford* reached Kinmel Park on 26th February 1919. This followed the common knowledge that the large ocean-going liners *Mauretania*, *Aquitania* and *Olympic*, originally allocated for Canadian troops, had been transferred for use by the Americans, few of whom had served as long as the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

As a last straw, General Sir Arthur Currie made the decision at the beginning of March to transport the 3rd Division as a whole back to Canada instead of the troops at Kinmel Park. Although there was no question that they were combat troops who deserved to return quickly, they had not been overseas as long as many of the men at Kinmel Park.

On Tuesday 4th March Number 1 Company, which included men who had been due to sail on the *S. S. Haverford*, were lined up on the parade ground for their routine route march. As Number 1 Company began to march off the men of Sailing Party number 21 broke ranks and streamed back into the huts in Camps 3 and 4, quickly followed by Number 1 Company.



Figure: 4 . A post card view of the Central Pavilion in Number 4 Camp

Despite attempts to appease the men the soldier's unrest erupted at 9.00 pm that evening with the looting of the canteen in Camp 7. General looting soon followed so that by dawn of March 5th, 11 Camp canteens and several messes had been smashed and looted; two YMCA buildings had been attacked; the NACB (Navy, Army and Canteen Board), Tobacco and Area Quartermasters stores had been broken into and robbed. In addition, the 11 shops in 'Tin Town' (the civilian shops near the main gate) had been wrecked and stripped of all their contents.



THE Y.M.C.A. CENTRAL PAVILION, NO 4 CAMP, KINMEL PARK
THE REFRESHMENT BUFFET AND BOOKSTALL. NO 5 Y.M.C.A. SERIES.

Figure: 5. The Concert Hall and Central Pavilion situated in Camp 4 were apparently not affected.

During Wednesday 5th March further rioting took place, as much about the conditions that they were living in as about the delay in repatriation. Following some fatal shootings around mid-afternoon which left five dead and another 23 wounded, the rioters dispersed, and calm was restored. 78 men were arrested and of whom 25 were convicted of mutiny and given sentences varying from 90 days' detention to ten years' penal servitude.

One soldier who was in the Camp at that time, Edward Andrews, in writing home to his father about the events of that day, said "Had a lively time last night and today. Needless to say, I have been on the side of law and order and did my bit towards quelling the disturbances."

The following day the Canadian Forces Chief of Staff, Sir Richard Turner, addressed the troops in separate groups advising them of a £2 pay advance, quasi-amnesty for looters returning stolen stores and advising them that sailings would recommence on 10th March with the departure of the *R. M. S. Celtic*

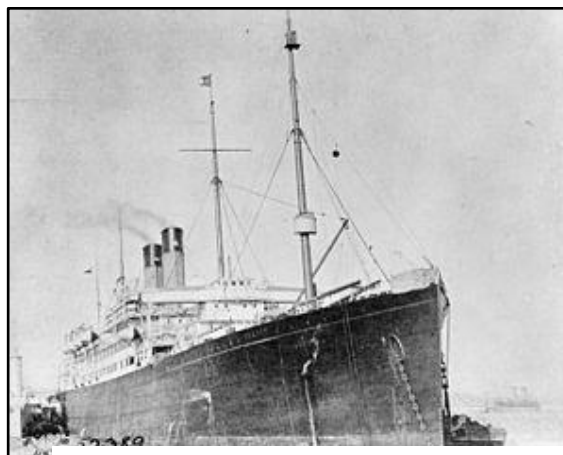


Figure: 8.

R.M.S. Celtic in 1919

There were riots by Canadian troops in other camps, but none were as serious as those at Kinmel Park. The extent of the unrest had brought a new sense of urgency to the repatriation process and concerns over the situation at Halifax, Nova Scotia, were set aside and arrangements put together. By late summer almost all the Canadian forces in England had sailed home.

Repatriation of the Canadian Expeditionary Force was carried out in nearly 300 crossings between 1st January 1919 and 18th February 1920. The majority of ships left from Liverpool as it was the nearest port to the Camp at Kinmel Park, where most of the soldiers were held in 'Wings' corresponding to the Military District in Canada where they were to be demobilised.



Figure: 9.

The above post card (*figure 9*) was issued in conjunction with the sailing of the *H.M.T. Olympic* from Southampton to Halifax, Nova Scotia, in July 1919. The contingent comprised of service personnel drawn from five groups: -

No. 4 General Hospital based at Whitley consisting of 19 officers and 130 men.

No. 9 Stationary Hospital at Basingstoke consisting of 31 officers, 100 men and 57 Nursing Sisters.

From Kinmel Park Camp – Draft Wing 1 (1 officer and 42 men); Draft Wing 3 (no details available) and Draft Wing 13 (30 Officers and 210 men).

The Canadian Army Service Corps were amongst the last to leave. This was a logistics unit which provided a support element, such as motorised transport, for each Canadian Division. Amongst them was 27-year-old Lieutenant Wilfred Butterworth who had been a coal merchant in civilian life. On May 19th 1919 he wrote two letters to his father in Ottawa, one to home address and a second to his office address containing details that he did not want to be shared generally with his family. In this second letter he expresses concern that his father had news of him attending a “sporty party”. “He (*the person who had reported him to his father*) may have seen me with some officers who had not a good reputation or something, but I assure you that I did not go to any

sporty parties. I am living a good decent respectable & honourable life over here.” Later on, he expresses his love for Doreen Atkinson and asks his father to destroy the letter. In his soldiers will, Wilfred had left Doreen \$300 in Victory Bonds in the event of his death.

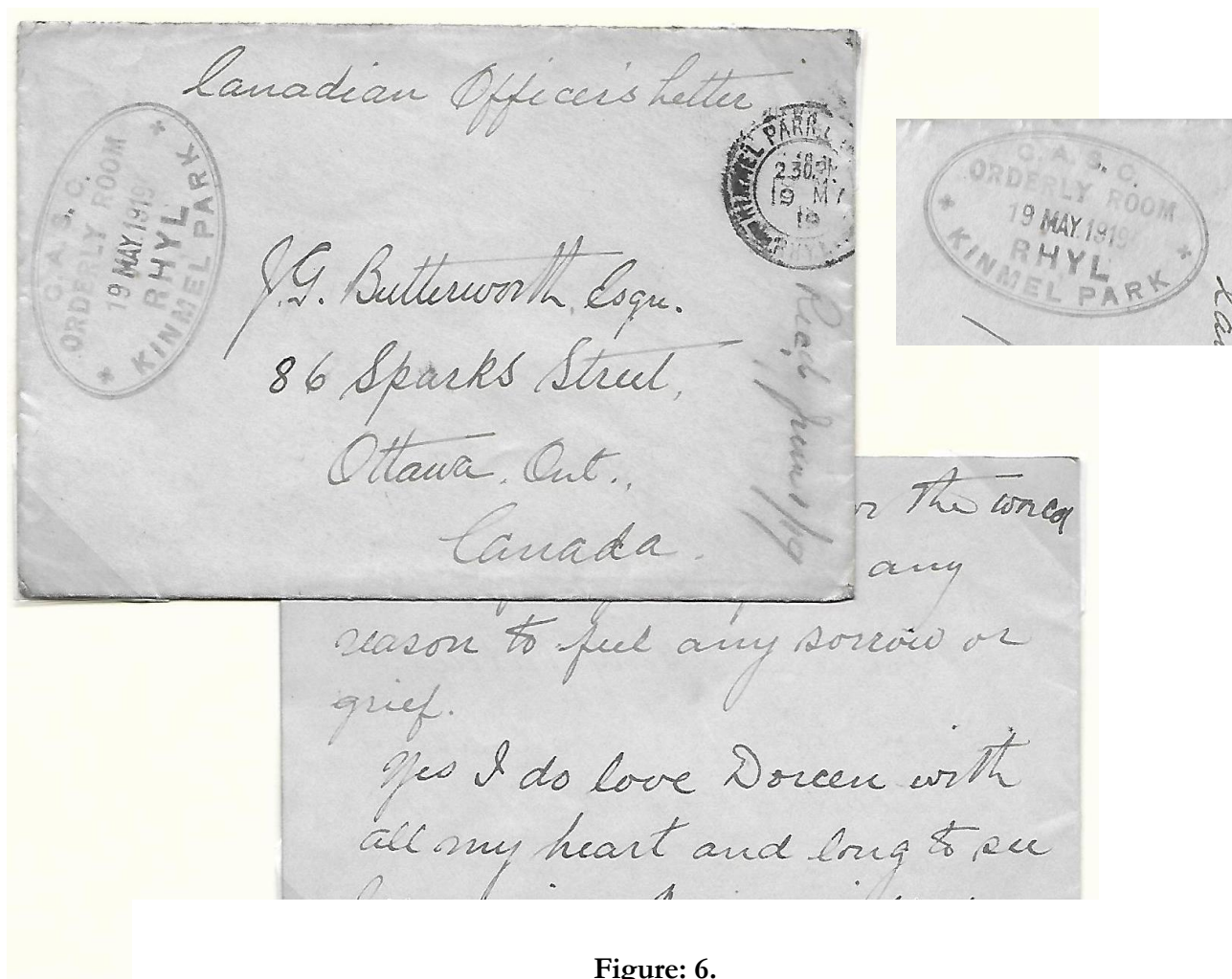


Figure: 6.

The letter sent to his father at the business address and which he requested be destroyed.

Kinmel Park Camp had been constructed from scratch on lush parkland in late 1914/early 1915. It became the largest military training camp in Wales, even having its own railway that eventually connected it to Rhyl. Many thousands of soldiers were trained at Kinmel Park Camp during the First World War and Conscientious Objectors were “dealt with” there.

The camp had a significant effect on the surrounding area, with road accidents, burglaries and musical entertainments of all kinds being visited upon the local population. Amongst those who spent time at Kinmel Park Camp in WW1 were Robert Graves the renowned war poet and author, and J. B. Priestley, the playwright and author. The town of Rhyl grew to accommodate the many thousands of soldiers and civilians from Kinmel Park Camp who all the year-round frequented Rhyl for its entertainments, refreshments and “seaside delights”.

HMT 602: A postcard with a great deal to show on both sides.

Tony Walker

This postcard is one of those delightful items which appear quite modest, a mere Transport at that, yet looking more closely it has a tale to tell involving the National Philatelic Society, HMT/HMHS *Braemar Castle* and HMT *Arcadian*

This postcard was addressed to **Mr Fred Melville**. Mr Melville had applied to join the *Philatelic Society*, the forerunner to the *Royal Philatelic Society London*, but was rejected as he was under 18 years old. So he founded the *Junior Philatelic Society* (JPS) in 1899. The JPS soon became the *National Philatelic Society* (NPS) as demand grew for a society that anyone could join. It continues in good shape today, over a hundred years later.

The postcard is addressed by **G Mais Commander of HMT 602** named as the ***Braemar Castle*** in early 1915, before she became a Hospital Ship later that year. She embarked the Plymouth and Chatham Battalions of the Royal Naval Division and others bound for Gallipoli, where she disembarked the troops on 25 April 1915, just two days after the BAPO / Y cancellation on the card. Presumably this means the earlier bagged mail was off-loaded as soon as the ship arrived?

The card is also censored G Mais, a mark recorded in *Gould Vol 2* as 1A129 **CREW H.M.T. 602 / CENSORED G.M. MASTER**

The **BAPO / Y cancel** of 23 April 1915 was applied on board HMT *Arcadian* at Mudros in the Aegean, Base APO Y was on-board HMT *Arcadian* until the 25th May, 1915 when it was transferred to HMT *Aragon*. This was due to the risk of U-Boat attack and potential loss of *Arcadian*.

Lastly the red square framed **PASSED BY / crown / No 2573 / CENSOR** is identified by Daniels as allocated to the **Portsmouth Battalion, RND**. This does not tie in with other information regarding the troop complement on board (see above), which suggests it was the Plymouth and Chatham Battalions being carried on HMT *Braemar Castle*



Figure: 1. The address side of the card described above, with surprisingly clear strikes of all three marks, together with the manuscript endorsements 'On Active Service' and 'No Stamps Available'.

The *Braemar Castle* was one of the last ships built for the Castle Line, before their merger with the Union Line to form the Union Castle Line. She was built in Glasgow and commissioned in 1898. She functioned briefly as a passenger liner to South Africa but spent much of her time as a peace-time troop carrier, before requisition by the Army in 1915 as a HM Troopship. Her first and only voyage as a Troopship was to the Aegean Sea to Gallipoli as recorded on the postcard above, the reverse (message) side being shown below. She departed on 6 February 1915 and arrived at Mudros on 23 April 1915.

Transport 602 NZ c/o G.P.O. London.
 Mr Melville Sir
 just rec'd Stamp Lover for March
 & by same mail rec'd letter from front with
 "On active service"
 Note: Correspondence in this envelope need not be censored
 Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination
 at the Base.
 The Certificate on the flap must be signed by the writer
 on flap "I certify on my honour that the contents of this
 envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters"
 Signed:-
 Sent me by a Serg't at the Horse Depot
 Yours E Mais J.P.S.
 Commander

Figure: 2. The message side of the postcard

The message is headed *Transport 602 c/o G.P.O. London* and is directed to *Mr Melville*

The message is signed by the Commander E Mais J.P.S., the latter initials referring to his membership of the Junior Philatelic Society, founded by Fred Melville.

The message is interesting, and Mais describes receiving one of the first type Green Honour Envelopes which had provision for a signature on the rear flap. Probably the first one he'd seen. Until early in 1915 the philatelic press, probably Gibbons Stamp Monthly, carried items from correspondents who were serving in the forces with details of FPO / APO, Censor Nos. and RFHMS cancels. One assumed this was discontinued for security reasons.

The message reads:

Sir, Just rec'd Stamp Lover (the magazine of the J.P.S.) for March (1915) and by same mail rec'd letter from front with: "On active service. Note: **Correspondence in this envelope not to be censored Regimentally. The contents are liable to examination at the Base. The certificate on the flap must be signed by the writer on flap.**"

"I confirm on my honour that the contents of this envelope refer to nothing but private and family matters"

Sent to me by a Serg't at the Horse Depot. / E Mais J.P.S. / Commander

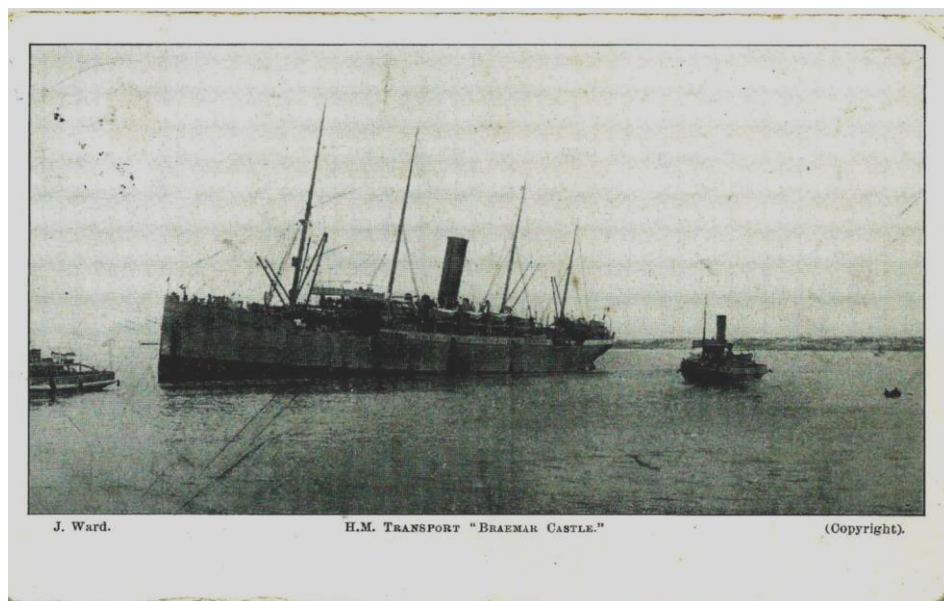
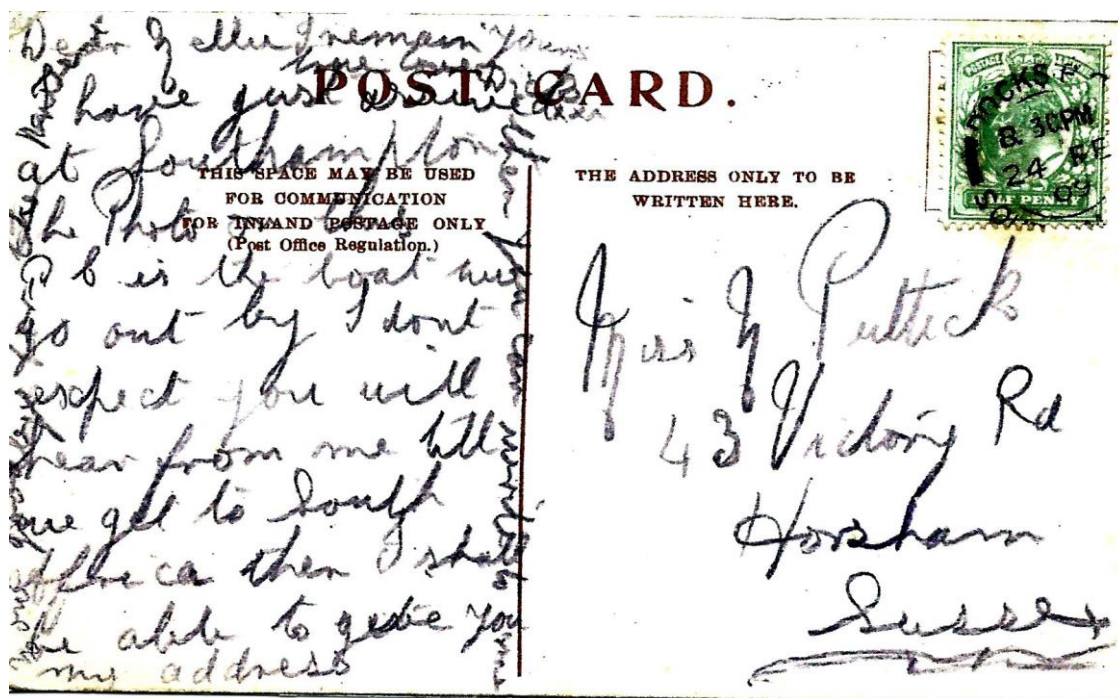


Figure: 3.

Photograph of HMT Transport Braemar Castle circa 1906 certainly looking like a troop transport rather than a Union Castle Line passenger liner.

Figure: 4. On the reverse is a Southampton Docks cds dated 24 February 1909 addressed to Horsham. The message is interesting and includes: '.... Have just arrived at Southampton. The photo on this PC is the boat we go out by. I don't expect you will hear from me till (sic) we get to South Africa then I shall be able to give you my address....'.



The BAPO / Y cancel of 23 April 1915 was applied on board *HMT Arcadian* at Mudros as noted previously. This liner was originally named *Ortona* when built by Vickers Maxim in Barrow in 1906 for the Pacific SN Co. of Liverpool for their Australian run.

The name of the ship changed to *SS Arcadian* in 1910 and in February 1915 she was converted to an AMC to become a troopship at the start of the war.

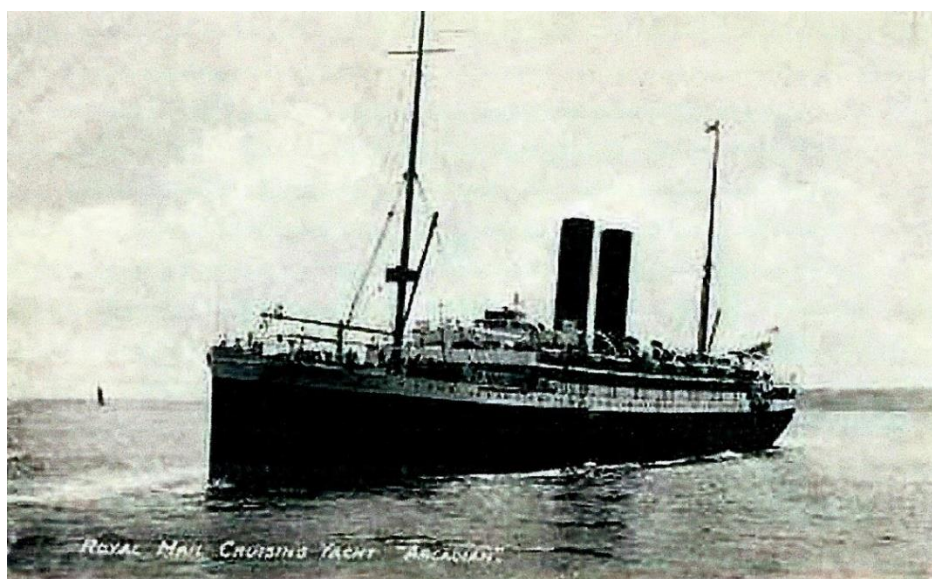


Figure: 5. Cover from *Arcadian* with a **PLYMOUTH PAQUEBOT** machine cancel is dated **15 October 1914**

A very early cover endorsed: *1st Canadian Expeditionary Force, 20,000 men / No stamps available on board RMSP Arcadian.* The **RFHMS / NCTBR** handstamp is similar to Gould RA 32 from Harwich. On the reverse is an embossed crest of The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.

Figure: 6. The *SS Arcadian* in her pre-war livery

On 7 April 1915 at Alexandria, and subsequently at Mudros, General Sir Ian Hamilton came aboard and used *Arcadian*, together with the battleship *Queen Elizabeth*, as his headquarters ship during the opening phase of the



Gallipoli Campaign. Whilst at this station she handled mail from *HMT Braemar Castle* including the item shown previously.

Historical note

In April 1917 *Arcadian* was *en route* to Alexandria from Thessaloniki with 1335 troops and crew on board when she was hit by a torpedo on 15 April from U Boat *UC-74* and sank in six minutes with the loss of 279 lives.

I am indebted to the Forces Postal History Society's internet Discussion Forum for much of the information concerning this item. In particular my thanks to Alan Baker, Frank Schofield and Chris Grimshaw.

Some Items from Lt. Cmdr. Geoffrey Hare, DSC, RN, 1941-1943.

Nick Colley

At the time of the few items of his that I have, Lt. Cmdr. Geoffrey Hare was an Observer in the Fleet Air Arm (FAA). He started the war as a Lieutenant but was promoted with immediate effect 1st December 1939 to Lt. Cmdr. By April 1940 he was an Observer with 712 Squadron, and his pilot and aircraft were aboard the cruiser HMS *Sheffield*. It was while serving aboard *Sheffield* that he won his DSC on 9th May 1940, in operations relating to the ill-fated Norwegian expedition (Ref.1). Sadly, I have been unable to establish the detailed context of the award.

He was appointed the Commanding Officer of 700 Squadron, FAA, at HMS *Sparrowhawk*, the RN Air Station at Hatston in the Orkneys in August 1940. He was posted to HMS *Grebe*, the RN Air Station at Dekheila in Egypt, about 10 kms along the coast south west of Alexandria in April 1941. The Navy List for June 1941 (i.e. corrected to 18th May) annotates his entry with 'For Special W/T Duties'.

At some point at about this time, he seems to have been detailed to command 800X Flight. The role of this unit was to provide a navigational guide for RAF Hurricanes due to be flown off the carriers HMS *Furious* and *Ark Royal* as reinforcements for Malta (Operation Splice). Ref.2 shows that on 18th May, HMS *Furious* arrived at Gibraltar with 64 Hurricanes, and nine Fulmars of 800X Flight. *Furious* moored stern to stern with *Ark Royal* and transferred 22 Hurricanes and five Fulmars to *Ark Royal*. The two carriers and their escorting vessels sailed from Gibraltar on 19th May.

Early on 21st May, the Hurricanes and Fulmars were flown off the carriers about 500 kms west of Cape Bon in Tunisia.



The Hurricanes seem to have been arranged in sections, each section with a Fulmar leader/guide. One of the sections is reported to have lost their Fulmar leader off Cape Bon

(Ref.2). This is almost certainly Lt. Cmdr. Hare's aircraft, which developed engine trouble and ditched less than a quarter of a mile from the shore. He and his crewman swam ashore and were subsequently incarcerated by the Vichy French in their internment camp at Laghouat, in the Sahara Desert, 400 kms south of Algiers. **Figures 1 and 2** show items of mail from Hare in Laghouat dated in 1942. Both bear the red circular cachet of the guard unit: **1^{er} REGIMENT DE SPAHIS * 2^e GROUPE D'ESCADRONS * / LE CHEF D'ESCADRONS**. Interestingly, this cachet is under the stamps. Both items have been opened and inspected by the French and British censors. The significance of the hand-stamped number 17 is not known.

How Hare came to be on board HMS *Ark Royal* to participate in this operation when he was supposed to be at Dekheila in Egypt is not clear. Perhaps the most plausible explanation is that he was, effectively, en route to his new posting, and he was therefore available to lead 800X Flight in this operation. It is probable that he would have travelled onwards from Malta at some point after the conclusion of Operation Splice to get to Egypt.

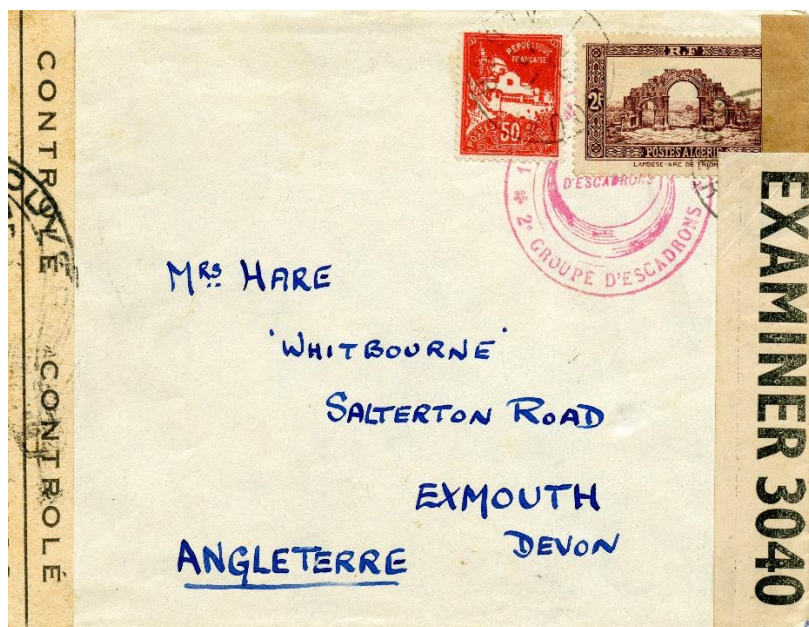


Figure: 1. Bearing stamps to the value of 2F50. Was this the rate for surface mail?

Figure: 2. bears stamps to 3F50 and is endorsed **PAR AVION**.

The reverse of Figure: 1.

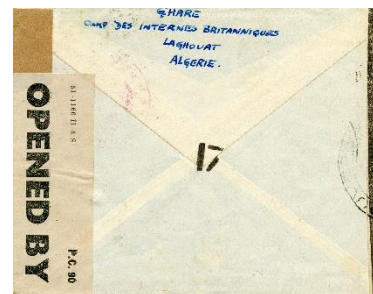


Figure: 2. Air mail from Laghouat at 3F50.

Reverse of Figure: 2.



With the Vichy authorities in control of Algeria, the American Consulate looked after the affairs of the British internees at Laghouat. It seems that inbound mail to these individuals was forwarded 'under cover' by the American Consulate – at least until the US entered the conflict, presumably.

Figure: 3. is an example of an envelope in which mail addressed to Lt. Cmdr Hare was forwarded to him. The postmark date is 18th November 1941.



After liberation from internment when the Allies took over (Vichy) Algeria in November 1942, Hare went on to serve aboard the escort carrier HMS *Striker* from February 1943. She was built in San Francisco and delivered to the US Navy in April 1943. She was transferred to the Royal Navy the following month. This item (**Figure: 4.**), with the censor mark dated 24th April 1943, must have originated from the US. The letter clearly went by surface mail, so presumably went across the US and then the Atlantic. The most likely stage for the alleged **DAMAGED BY ENEMY ACTION** would be the transit of the Atlantic, when, in the late spring of 1943, the U boat offensive was at its most intense.





Figure: 5. *HMS Striker*



Figure: 6. Flight Deck of *HMS Striker*.

He would, no doubt, have been involved in air operations with *Striker* when she finally joined the Fleet in the UK in December 1943, providing anti-submarine air patrols for the trans-Atlantic convoys.

Hare's final wartime appointment was to HMS *Saker* in Washington DC, on the staff of the Naval Air Representative, in the acting rank of Commander.

References

- 1: https://www.unithistories.com/officers/RN_officersH2.html
- 2: <https://www.naval-history.net/xGM-Chrono-04CV-Ark%20Royal.htm>

Daynes EA B4 BASE CENSOR Marker Number I/01

Ross Debenham

I attach a copy of a cover with the above-mentioned censor marker that according to J.A. Daynes "Censor Marks of World War 2" and Proud's "History of the East African Army Postal Service" did not exist or was never used in East Africa during World War 2. **Figure: 1.**

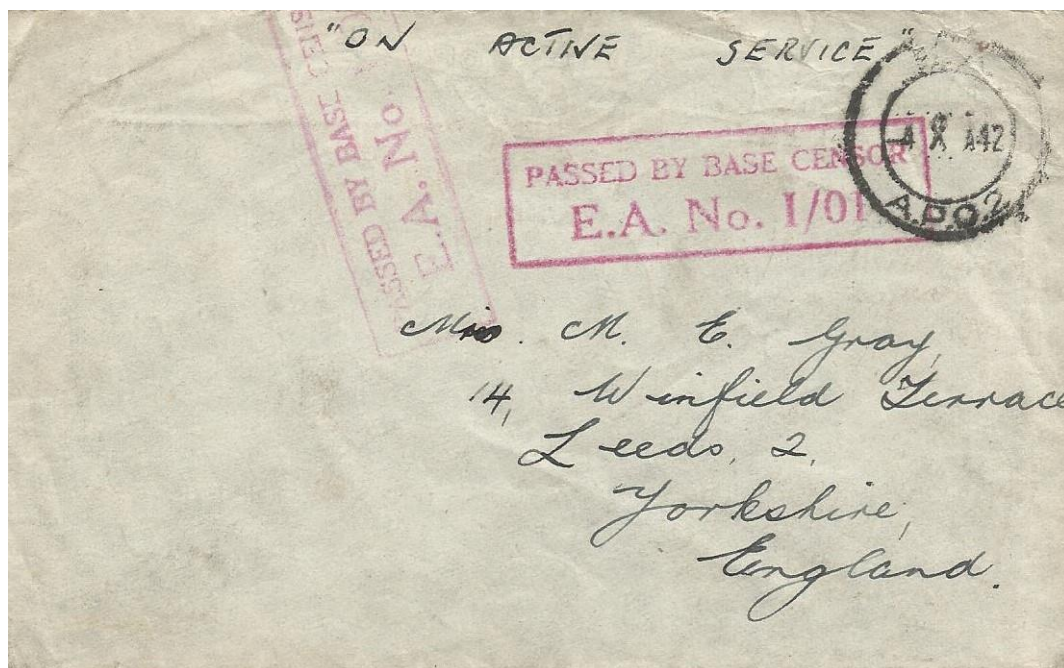


Figure: 1.

When I purchased this cover from a dealer in England a few years ago I must admit I was perplexed. I could not understand why prefixes II to V would be issued but not a stamp with Prefix I, and if it was used why are covers stamped with this censor mark are practically non-existent. It was also noted that this cover is post marked at Army Post Office 2 in Nairobi on 1 December 1942. I could not find any other correspondence from the sender of the letter, so I wondered if it might be a bit spurious. Imagine my amazement when on eBay a couple of months ago there finally appeared three letters from the same person but this time hit with the "RECEIVED FROM H M SHIPS" cachet, and censored used Daynes N460 censor marker that was used in Kilindini in Kenya. This was the port for Mombasa and was where all incoming troops were off loaded and on loaded to ships for destinations further north. **Figure: 2.**

Figure: 3. shows the address of the service man that sent the envelopes which is identical on both envelopes. One question raised is if this Base Censor Marker I/01 was used at the naval base at Kilindini, why wasn't the much closer Army Post Office 66 at Mombasa or Army Post Office 81 at the sub-base post office at Port Reitz, which serviced the Fleet Air Base in Mombasa Harbour used. I also wonder if this stamp was used at Eastern Fleet Headquarters which had been transferred from Ceylon to Kilindini in 1942, following the perceived threat to the island by the Japanese and stayed there until August 1943, and would have been at Kilindini when this cover was posted.

Thanks to the valued assistance of various members of the forum it has been ascertained that the sender was a member of 1833 Squadron, Fleet Air Arm which was on board HMS *Illustrions* which was stationed at Kilindini from 1942 to 1945 as part of the British Eastern Fleet.

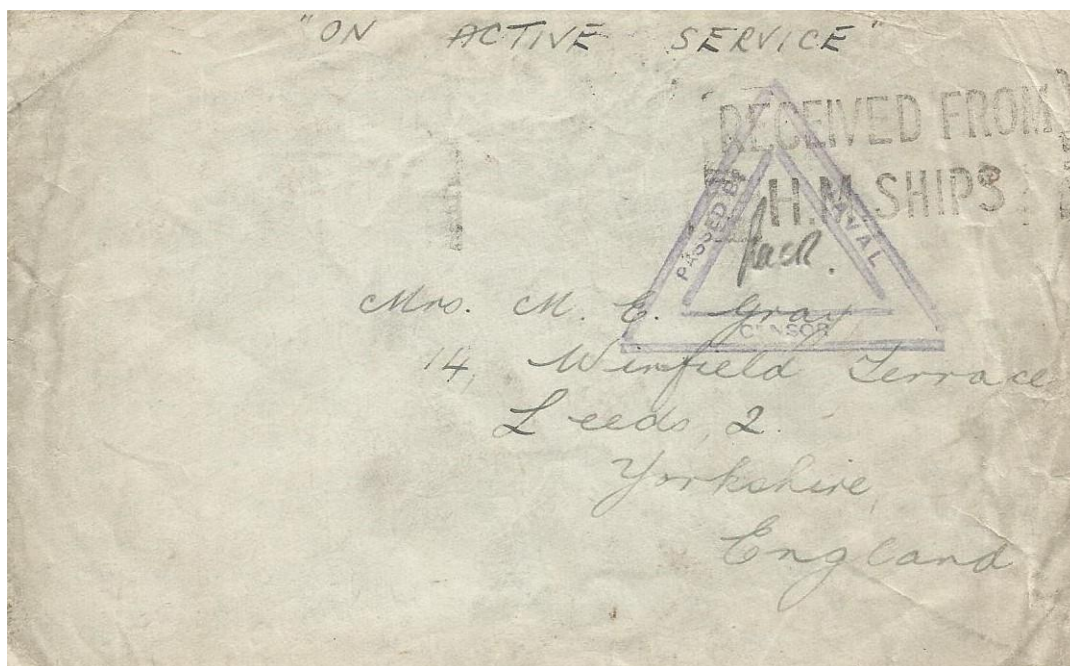


Figure: 2.

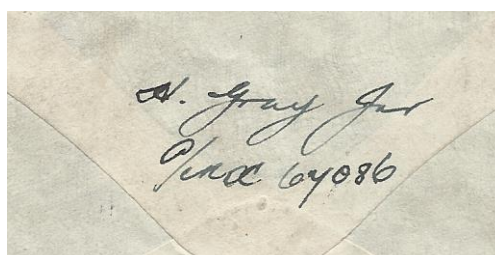


Figure: 3.

Once again this brings into question where the previously unobserved Base Censor I/01 was used. Was it distributed to the navy base at Kilindini, and subsequently replaced a short time after by Naval Censor Markers. The use of the marker in Nairobi, would be unnecessary as the markers with the II prefix were being used there.

I am writing this article on the off chance that members of the society may possess covers with the I/01 Base Censor stamp.

References.

J.A. Daynes "Censor Marks of World War 2"

Ted. Proud "History of the East African Army Postal Service"

More accurate terminology for censor seals

Joh Groenewald

AS our studies of wartime postal history and the censorship of mail become more refined, so should our terminology in describing the evidence of censorship, particularly in respect of censor seals.

Following some questions and confusion, the South African military mail collectors debated terminology relating to censor seals, being the devices used to re-seal envelopes which had been slit open for examination by postal or censoring authorities.

It was noted that various terms are used to describe such, being seals, labels and tapes (the latter especially in America). [In French, “bandes de censure”, being strips or tapes.]

Actually, one finds the following on covers –

1. Censor strips (continuous stationery) (can also be unprinted strips of paper)
2. Censor labels, being individually perforated or guillotined labels, usually with a gummed back.
3. Ungummed labels, which one may usually recognise by traces of gum on the envelope somewhere alongside the seal.
4. Stickers, being self-adhesive labels.
5. Tape, especially transparent Sellotape with printed letters or numerals (US).

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* gives the primary meaning of the noun as “a piece of wax, lead or other such material, impressed with device and attached in some way to a document usually in addition to a signature as a guarantee of authenticity”. The 5th meaning of the noun is given as “substance used to close aperture etc, esp ... water drain ...”. Indeed, as a noun we use the word “seal” to describe the device used to close an envelope.

It may be noted that “sealing label” is also used for damaged mail, as in “found open” or “found damaged and officially sealed / resealed”.

Eventually the specialists agreed that labels used to seal, or re-seal censored envelopes should be generically termed:

censor resealing labels

This generic term for the whole lot is long and cumbersome, but it avoids confusion. It hoped that this term will be used in general, as the umbrella description, except where it is intended to specifically describe an item as a censor strip (continuous strip, torn or cut where convenient) or a censor label (an individual piece of paper), or specific then, a censor sticker or a censor tape.

Joh Groenewald is a member of the Boer War Society and the South African P.S. Resident in George. South Africa.

The Demise of The German Light Cruiser SMS KÖNIGSBERG in WWI

Tony Walker

At the joint meeting of the FPHS and the East African Study Circle in 2019, SMS *Königsberg* featured in several of the displays given by members from both societies. I was not present at that meeting, so was apprehensive at writing an article on the *Königsberg* when several members will have already heard about it and many more read the meeting report in the Newsletter. However, Nick Colley was adamant! Go ahead he commanded, especially as the illustrations would be an added attraction. So being an obedient fellow, here we go.

The *Königsberg* was launched in 1905 and commissioned on 6 April 1907. Pre-war she escorted the Kaisers personal yacht, before being assigned to German East Africa at the outbreak of WWI, tasked with harassing British vessels using the entrance to the Red Sea. She claimed one merchant ship in this time, plus the British cruiser HMS *Pegasus*. The *Königsberg* sank the old British cruiser HMS *Pegasus* in Zanzibar harbour on 20 September 1914 with the loss of 31 lives and 55 injured. As a result, HMS *Chatham* was ordered to East Africa to join up with sister ships *Weymouth* and *Dartmouth* and take part in the hunt for the *Königsberg*.

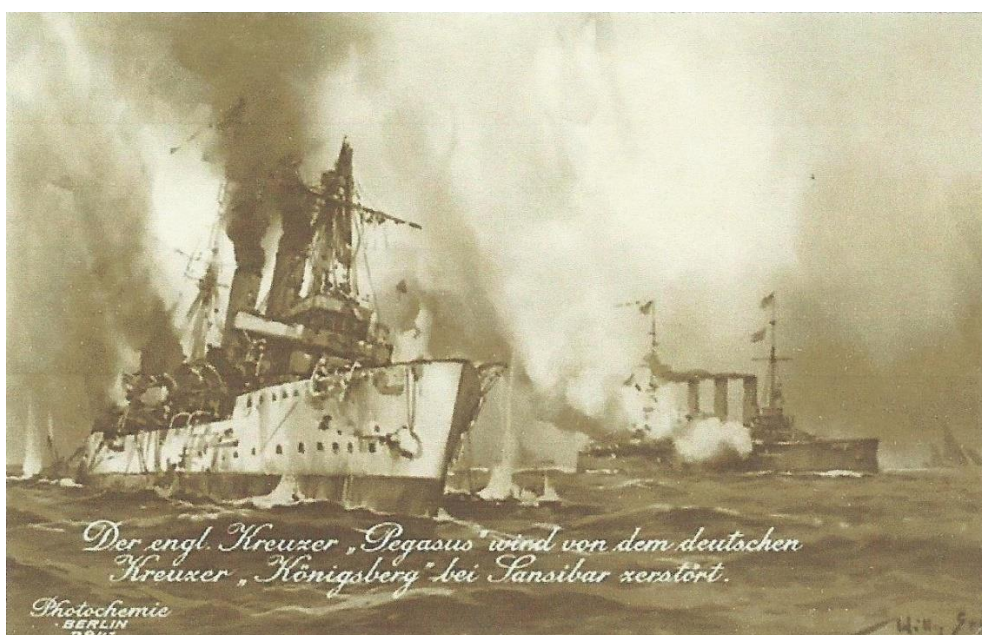


Figure: 1. German postcard depicting the sinking of HMS *Pegasus* by SMS *Königsberg* (reduced), from the collection of Nick Colley

HMS *Chatham*, a Town Class Light Cruiser launched from Chatham Dockyards in 1911, was quickly on the scene, arriving in Zanzibar on 28 September 1914. On 19 October *Chatham's* boats found the German steamer *Präsident* 3.5 miles upriver from the coast in the Rufiji River Delta with documents aboard indicating she had acted as a supply ship for *Königsberg*.



Figure: 2. HMS *Chatham* undated cover with dumb eight-barred circle cancellation, plus double ring **PASSED BY / * CENSOR *** mark known from HMS *Chatham* (Gould 6B82), together with photo of ship and cigarette card silk of the period.

The Germans claimed the ship was a Hospital Ship, but the British found no medical equipment on board and they had not been notified of the German ships status. The German ship was claimed as a Prize of war.

Meanwhile the Protected Cruiser HMS *Hyacinth*, built at the Govan yards and commissioned in 1900, had been attached to the Cape Station before the war and ordered to seek and shadow the *Königsberg*. She spotted her but could not match her speed, and she disappeared. She was subsequently ordered to German East Africa and arrived at the end of January 1915. On 14 April 1915 the German supply ship *Kronburg* was intercepted by HMS *Hyacinth* and sunk. She had been supplying the *Königsberg* in the back reaches of the Rufiji Delta.

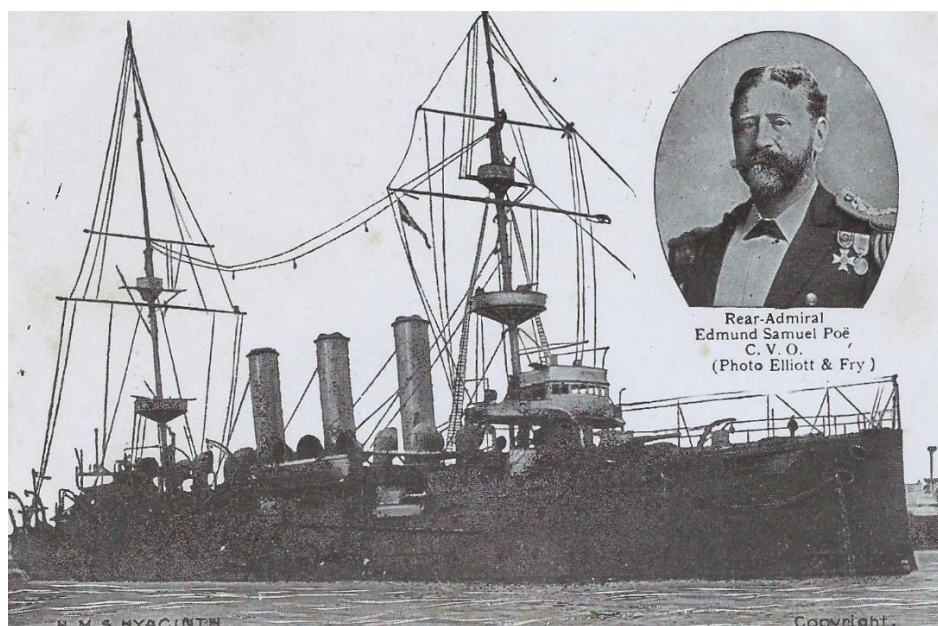


Figure: 3. The protected Cruiser HMS *Hyacinth*

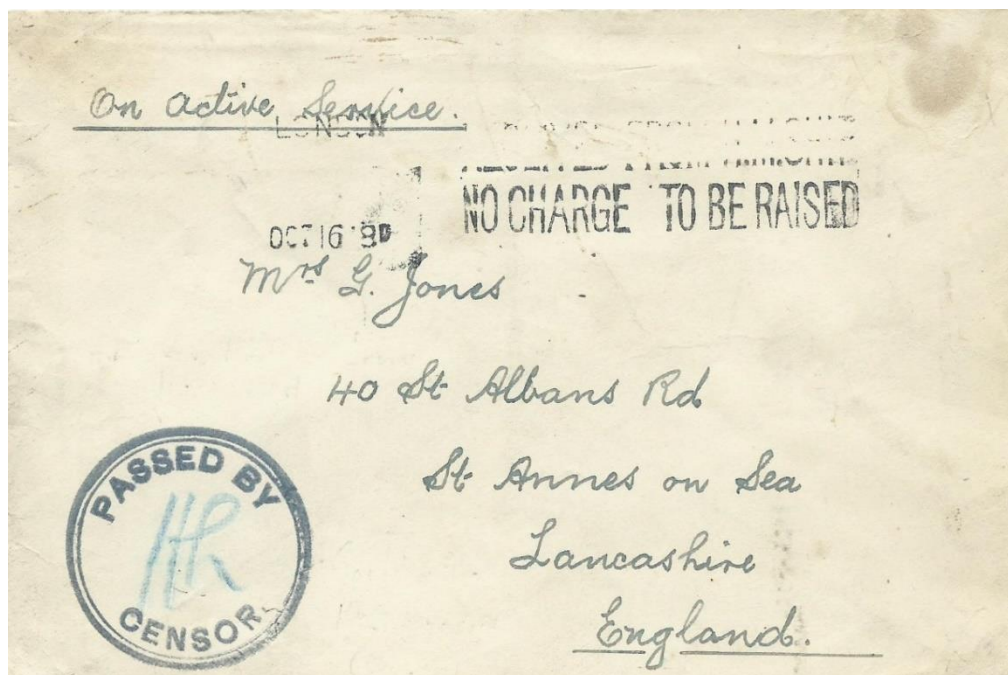


Figure: 4. Envelope with London machine cancel dated 16 October 1918, plus distinctive double rim mark **PASSED BY / CENSOR** known used on board *Hyacinth* and confirmed on this cover by the censor's initials HL of the ships Chaplain HRH Lightbourne.

The British also lost a ship, the Patrol Boat HMS *Adjutant*, a German tug captured on 10 October 1914 by HMS *Dartmouth* who had arrived earlier with HMS *Chatham*. She was then recaptured by the Germans when she was damaged by gunfire on 6 February 1915 undertaking reconnaissance of one of the entrances to the Rufiji River Delta. She was dismantled by the Germans and dodged the British blockade of the Delta to be taken to Dar-es-Salaam where she was packed into 5,000 crates and taken overland through German East Africa to Lake Tanganyika where she was reassembled. That story continues but is for another day.

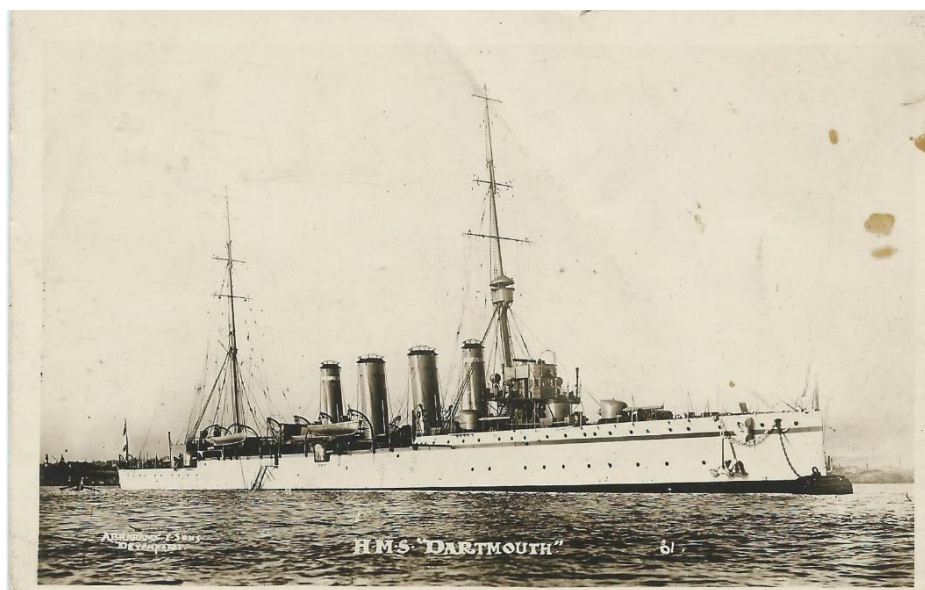


Figure: 5. Postcard of HMS *Dartmouth*, used at Plymouth and sent from a sailor on board.

On 30 October 1914 the cruiser HMS *Chatham* found *Königsberg* and the supply ship *Somali* up the Rufiji River, but owing to the shallowness of the river delta, could not closely approach the two German ships.

On 2 November *Dartmouth* attempted to engage *Königsberg* and the supporting steamer *Somali*, but

the German ships were too far upstream to be successfully engaged. However, on 7 November *Chatham* hit *Somali* with a shell, causing a fire that destroyed the ship, whilst on 10 November the British scuttled the collier *Newbridge* in the Rufiji River as a blockship to prevent *Königsberg* from escaping to sea, although two other channels remained open.

It was obvious that special shallow-working ships were needed to successfully tackle the *Königsberg*, and the Humber Class River Monitor and Gunboat fitted the bill. Two such ships, HMS *Mersey* and HMS *Severn* were enthusiastically bombarding German troops from off the Belgian coast at this time, at the Battle of the Yser. The ships were due to go to the Dardanelles, but sailed instead on 28 April 1915 via Malta and Aden, arriving at Mafia Island on 3 June 1915. The two ships were towed to the Rufiji Delta by Liverpool and Thames Fleet tugs.



Figure: 6. A real photographic postcard of three Monitors, HMS *Severn* is at the front, *Mersey* to the rear.

The postcard was cancelled at Barrow-in-Furness on 29 November 1914 with the message describing the function of the Monitors and their use by the navy.

"Dear Mr Kenyon

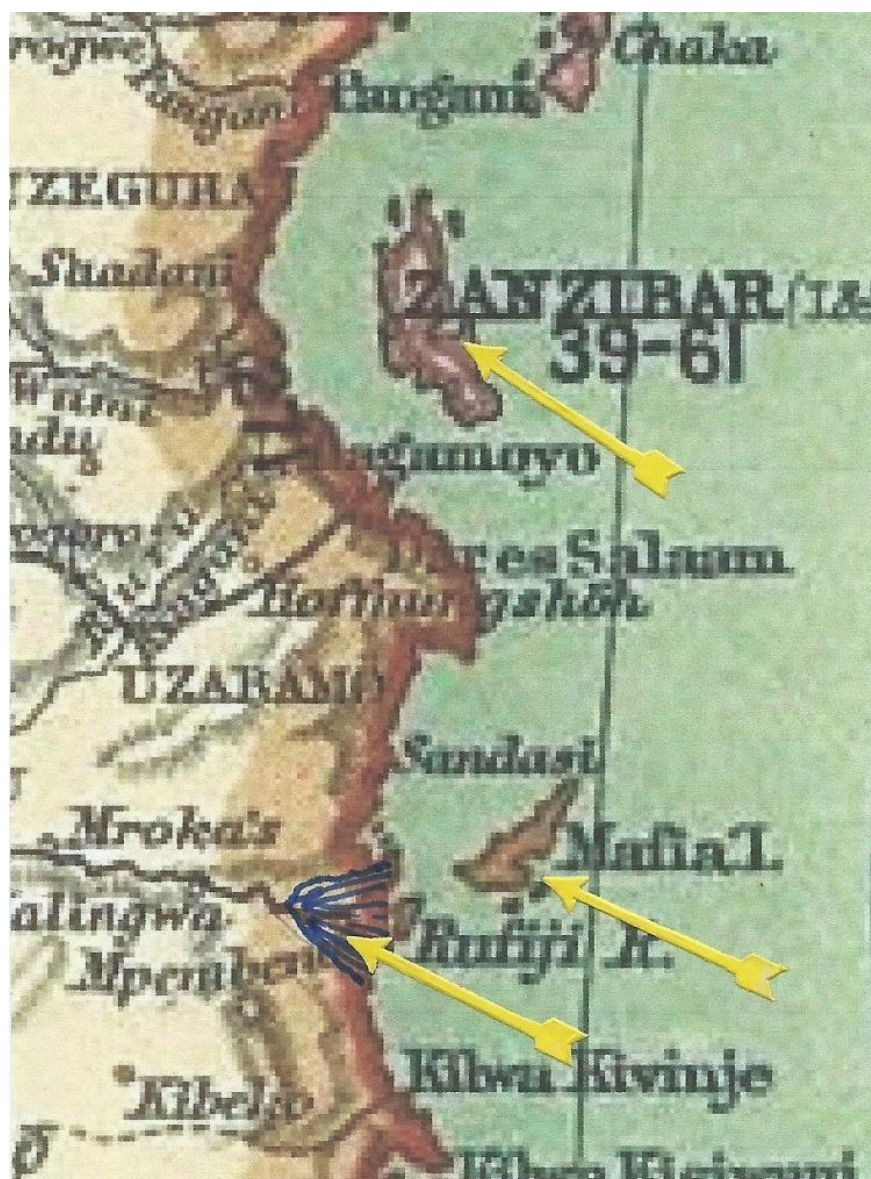
Many thanks for your letter.

These monitors were built originally for Brazil and were intended for river service: when the war began our government appropriated them and as you know they have proved undoubted for coastal work. The Severn is the one on which the explosion occurred, it is the nearest....." Transcript of card reverse. Ed

Originally built for Brazil, these ships can operate in shallow coastal waters and river estuaries and were requisitioned by the Admiralty at the start of the war. They were ideal for navigating in the Rufiji River delta

It is time to illustrate the location of the Rufiji Delta, Zanzibar and Mafia Island so that all these manoeuvres can be put in place.

Figure: 7. Extract of a contemporary map of 1910 showing the east coast of Africa from north of Zanzibar to south of Mafia Island and the Rufiji Delta highlighted.



German East Africa is shown in orange. The Island of Zanzibar was British and Mafia Island 150 miles south was German, standing some 30 miles off the Rufiji Delta. Mafia Island had been bought by Germany in 1890 from the Ruler of Zanzibar for £4 million.

It was settled by a small number of Germans two years later. Britain needed the island as a base from which to attack the *Königsberg*. A British force was landed on 8 January 1915 from HMS *Fox* and the converted liner *Kinfauns Castle*. The island was captured after a sharp battle, on 11 January 1915. An airstrip was constructed by the RNAS and a hangar erected on 20 June 1915.



Returning to the River Monitors HMS *Severn* and *Mersey*. The covers below chronicle their journey from the Belgian coast on 28 April 1915 to their arrival at Mafia Island on 3 June.

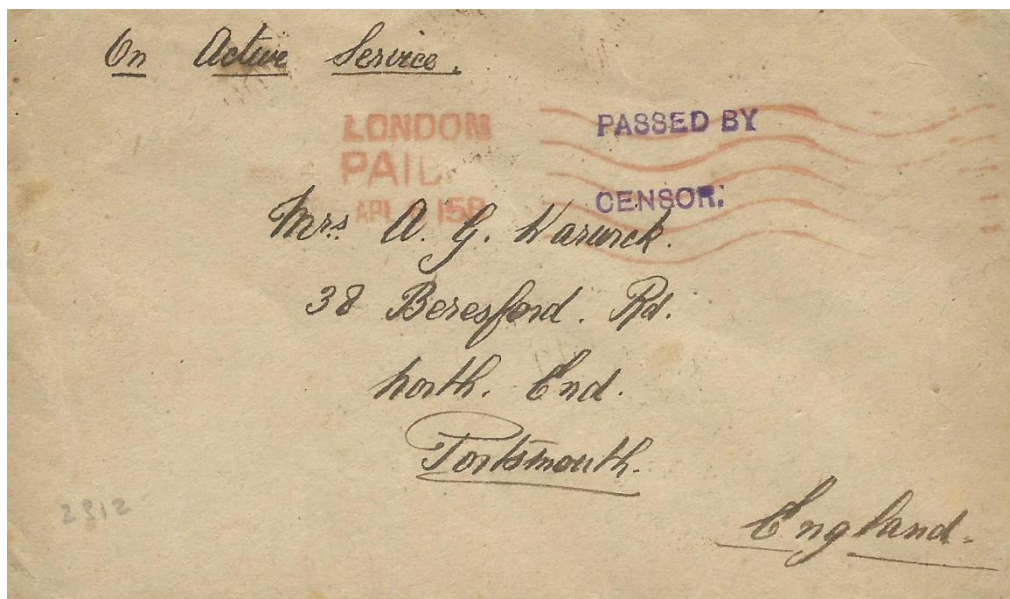


Figure: 9. Cover dated by **LONDON / PAID / APL 6 1915** machine cancel, with the vertically staggered **PASSED BY / CENSOR.** from HMS *Severn*. At this time both Monitors were off the Belgian coast.

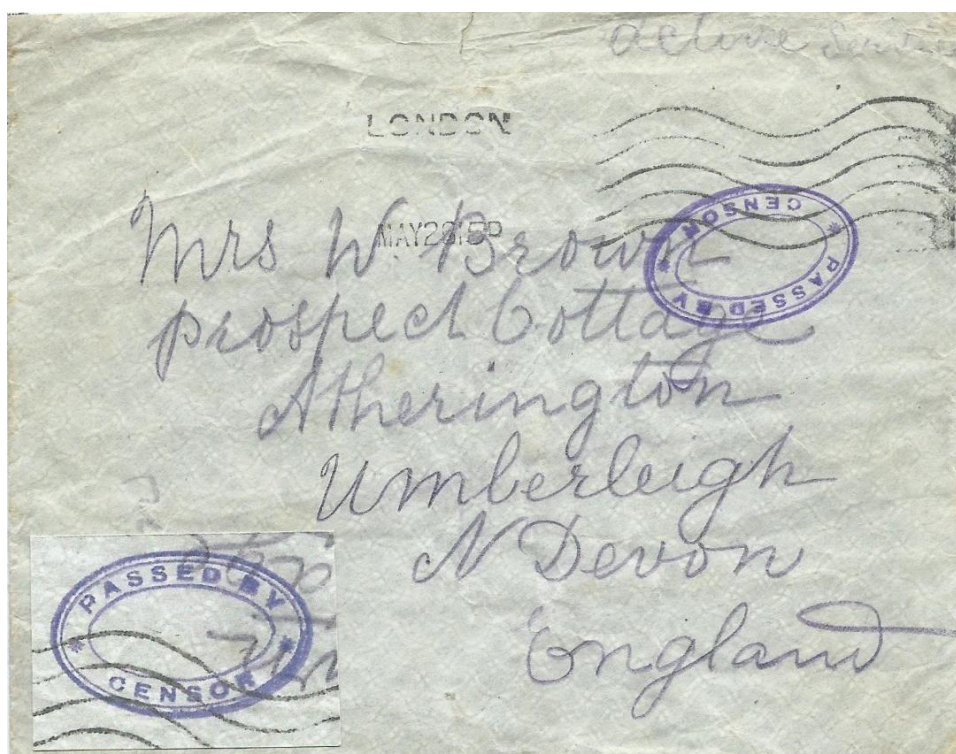


Figure: 10. Cover dated by **LONDON / MAY 26 15** machine cancel, with the distinctive double rimmed oval mark **PASSED BY / * CENSOR *** in purple from HMS *Mersey*. (The cover has been endorsed erroneously in pencil '*Severn*'). At the time both ships were en route to the Indian Ocean, so probably posted in Aden.

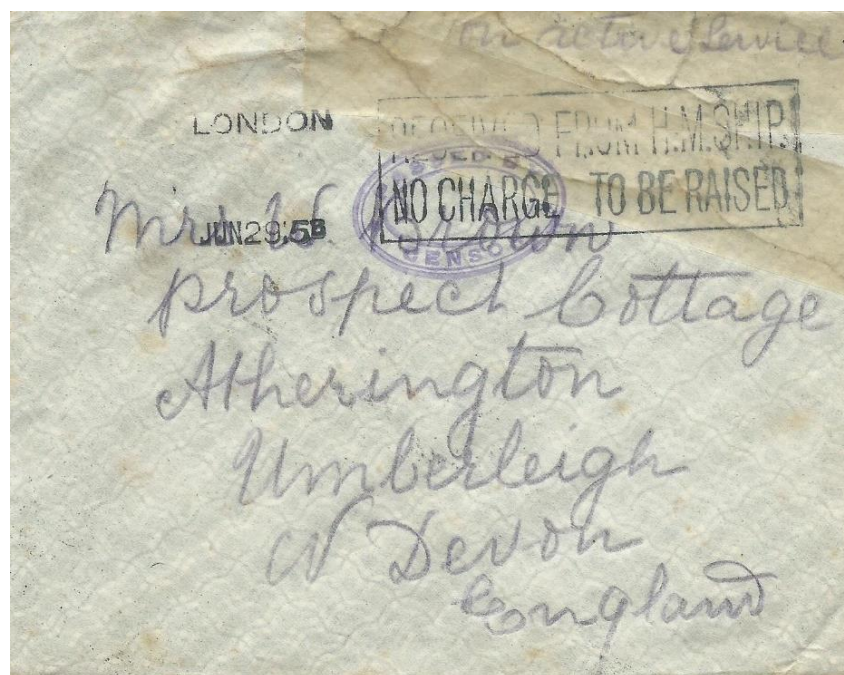


Figure: 11. Cover dated by LONDON / JUN 29 15 machine cancel with HMS *Mersey* censor mark. In early June *Severn* and *Mersey* were at Zanzibar where this letter would have been posted.

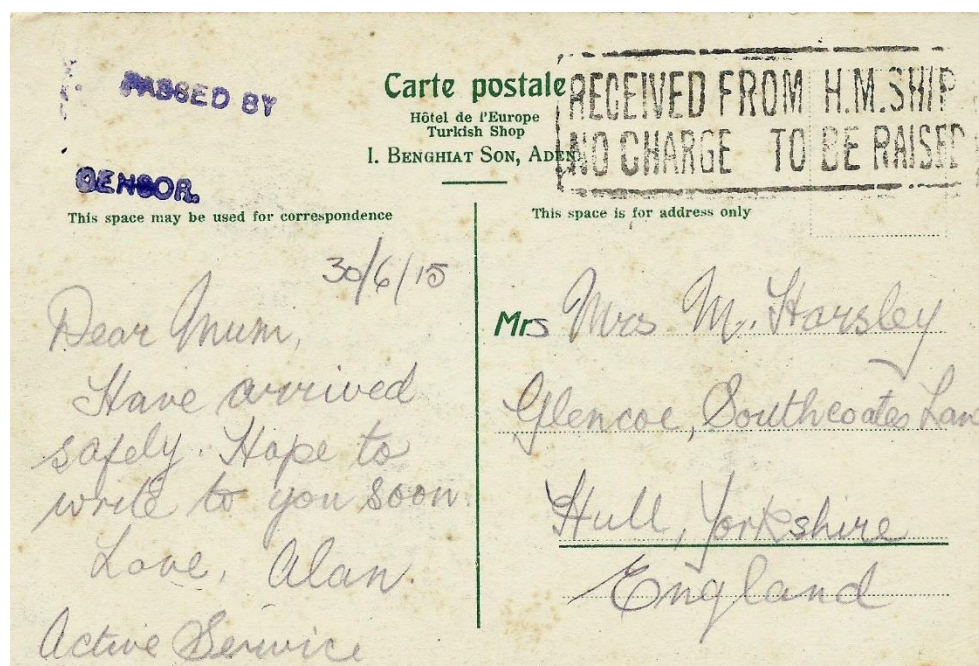


Figure: 12. Postcard dated 30 June 15 in the message, on a PPC of Aden, with the censor mark of HMS *Severn*. The writer 'Alan' most likely purchased this card at Aden and posted it at Mafia Island that day, where according to the ships log, the ship was

anchored. In the message Alan writes 'Have arrived safely....'

Taking up positions 10,000 yards from the *Königsberg* on 6 July 1915, out of range of the German cruiser's smaller guns, the monitors opened fire. However, their navigation was faulty and the *Königsberg* hit the *Mersey*, and both British ships were forced to retire. See Figure: 8.

The second attempt to destroy the German cruiser on 11 July 1915 was successful, following courageous spotting by a number of RNAS and commissioned private aircraft

flying from the base created on Mafia Island, not far south from the permanent port and airfield on Zanzibar.

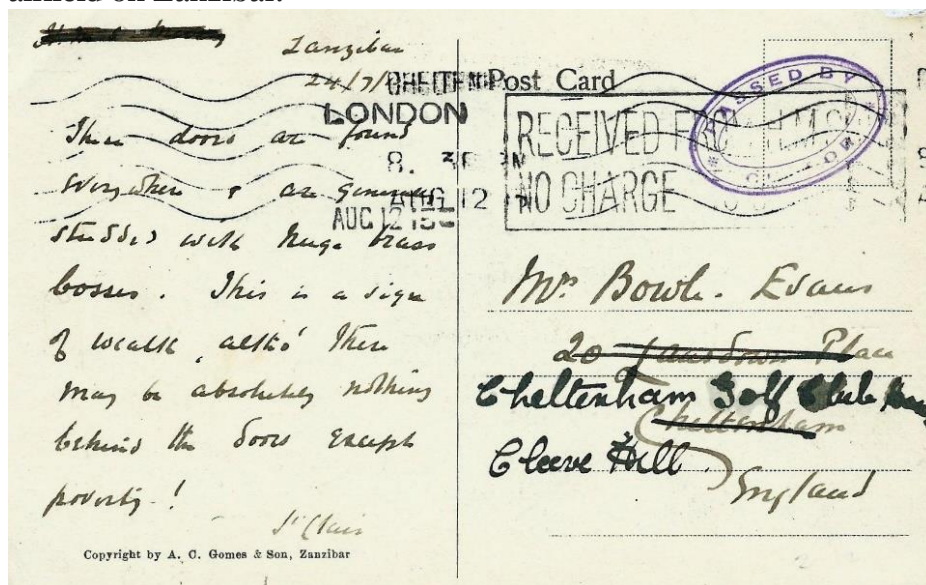


Figure: 13. Card dated by LONDON / AUG 12 15 machine cancel with the double oval censor mark from HMS Mersey, with the ships name also unsuccessfully erased in the message, by the censor. However, 'Zanzibar' and the date of 24 July 1915 are given in the message, just 13

days after the action. The writer will have returned to the base in Zanzibar after the shelling and sent his card from there with a PPC of Zanzibar.

The operation against the *Königsberg* was largely serviced by a temporary base on Mafia Island, with ships and aircraft returning to the main base on Zanzibar for more substantial repairs, stores and support. The *Königsberg* was adept at hiding beneath the dense forest canopy in the delta, making it difficult to locate from the air. A contingent of 20 men and two Sopwith seaplanes left Tilbury Docks on 16 January 1915 and arrived at Zanzibar on 20 February 1915 where the RNAS had already established a presence.

They left almost immediately for a nearby island (Niororo) as a temporary base before the runway was completed on Mafia Island. However, the local climate, thinner air and tropical heat played havoc with the aircraft, which could only fly with a pilot, one hour of fuel and no bombs. The sun also caused painful blistering on the men and melted the glue and paintwork on the planes.

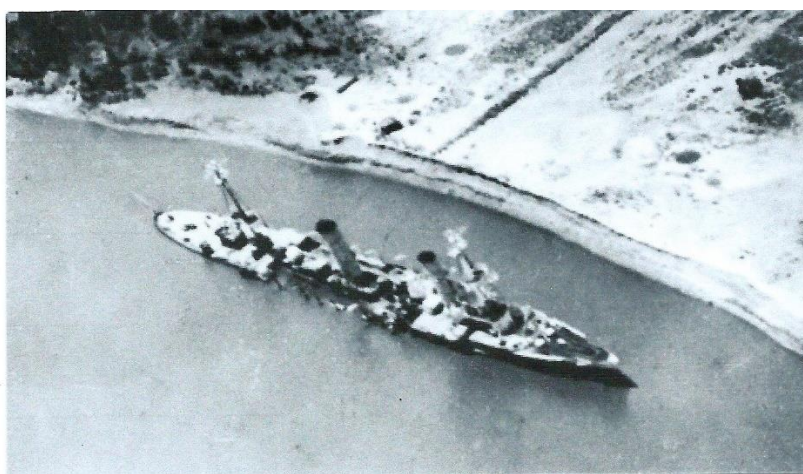
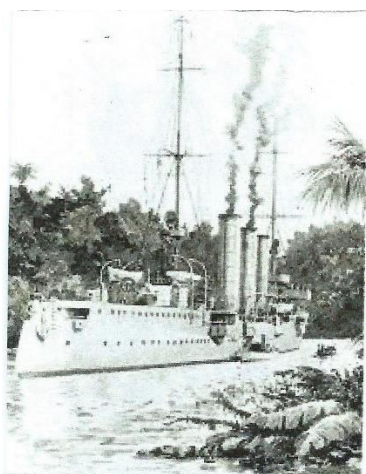


Figure: 14.

The *Königsberg* amongst the vegetation surrounding the channels and after being shelled by *Mersey* and *Severn*, lying in shallow water in the delta after being scuttled by the captain. The crew escaped into the German East African territory.

Following these unsuccessful earlier attempts at spotting, in March 1915 the squadron moved north to Mombasa for further training, returning in April with 'new' planes, three elderly Short 122 Folders. They continued reconnaissance from April to June, when the Monitors *Mersey* and *Severn* arrived. Four planes accompanied the Monitors and were based at Mafia Island. These planes with shore-based personnel spotted the fall of shells from the Monitors.

Inland the Rufiji delta consisted of dense forests and mangrove swamps, providing excellent cover for the *Königsberg* which was also camouflaged by the crew with vegetation. Along the channel snipers and gun positions were hidden, which fired on searching aeroplanes bringing one down.

HMS *Laconia*, a requisitioned Cunard liner had been modified to carry two seaplanes on her quarter deck and was based at Simonstown in South Africa. She was sent to assist in the spotting of the German cruiser and arrived at Mafia Island on 2 July 1915 just nine days before *Mersey* and *Severn* successfully disabled the *Königsberg*. The seaplanes from *Laconia* were instrumental in spotting the German ship.

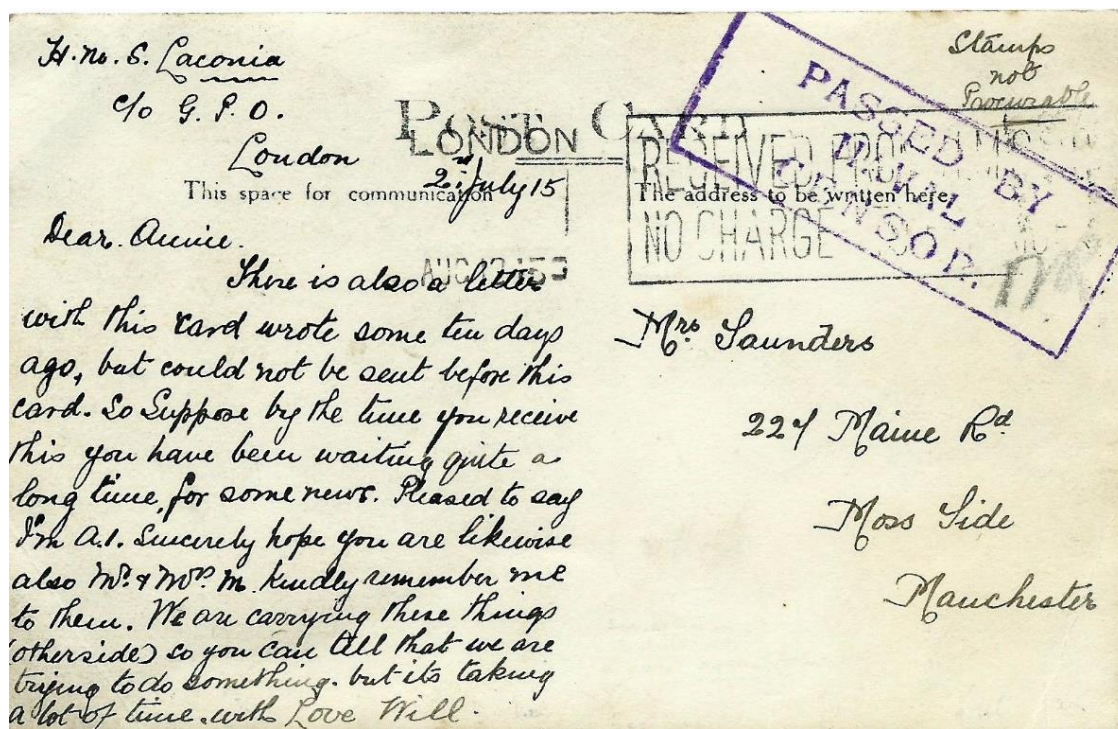


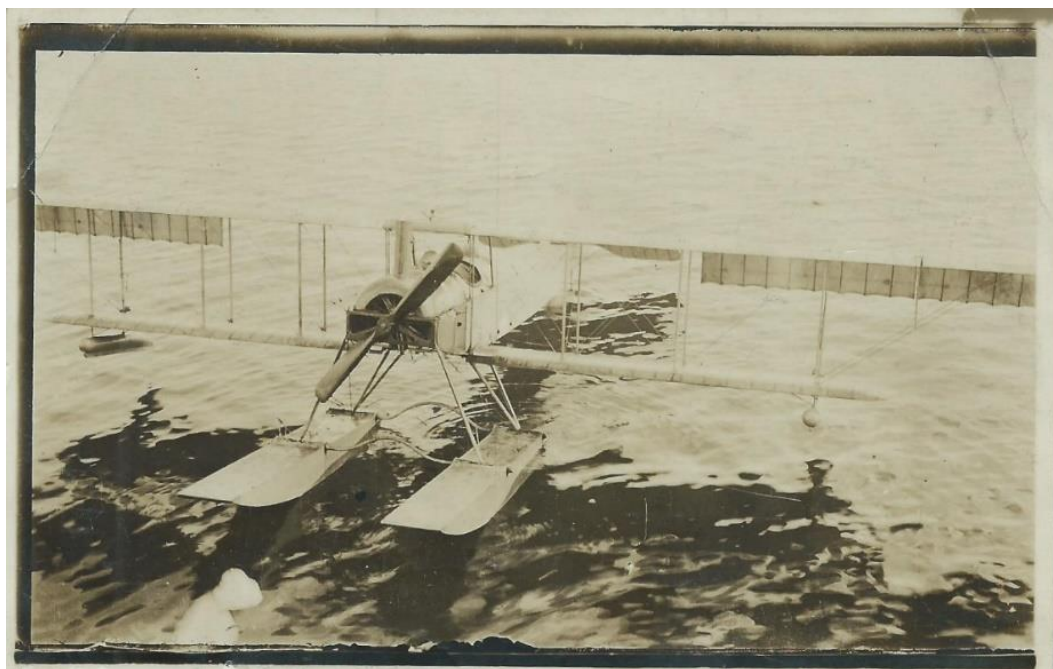
Figure: 15. PPC from HMS *Laconia* dated by LONDON AUG 12 15 machine cancel. The boxed mark **PASSED BY / NAVAL / CENSOR** confirmed here used on HMS *Laconia* named in the message.

The message is revealingly dated 2 July 1915. On this day the ship's log records *Laconia* anchored at Mafia Island with ten other assorted ships. The message includes: 'We are carrying these things (other side) so you can tell that we are trying to do something, but its taking a lot of time'.

On the reverse (other side) is the photograph below of a Short 122 Seaplane, two of which were

on board the *Laconia*

Figure: 16. A Short 122 Seaplane



The Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) played an important role in the destruction of the *Königsberg*, and with the proximity of German East Africa, the RNAS port, naval and aircraft facilities on Zanzibar were utilised to provide aircraft to spot for enemy ships taking supplies to the German colony. It remained active throughout the war.

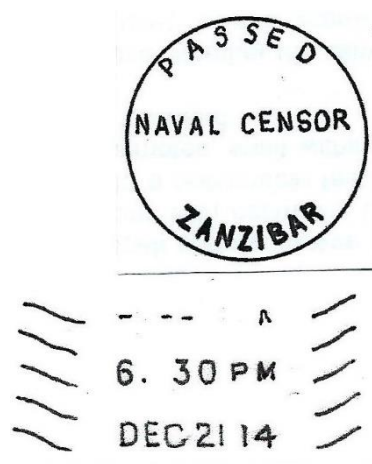


Figure: 17. An excellent strike of the scarce circular censor mark **PASSED / NAVAL CENSOR / ZANZIBAR** (Gould 2A24) on piece with GV 2½d adhesive and inverted partial machine cancel 6.30PM / DEC 21 14

An early date for this scarce cancel. Gould also has an example under (2A25) and asks in his Second Edition if anyone can confirm it exists? An RNAS presence had been recorded back in 1915 when 'RNAS personnel were taken from Zanzibar by the armed liner *Laconia* to Mombasa' as noted by Brad King in his book 'Royal Naval Air Service; 1912 – 1918'. However, it is obvious the RNAS were in Zanzibar well before this date otherwise how could they be taken away from Zanzibar on the *Laconia*! Perhaps the RNAS personnel did not have a distinguishing

censor mark and used the one in **Figure 17** above.

Lastly a variation on this censor mark is shown below (Gould 2A23)

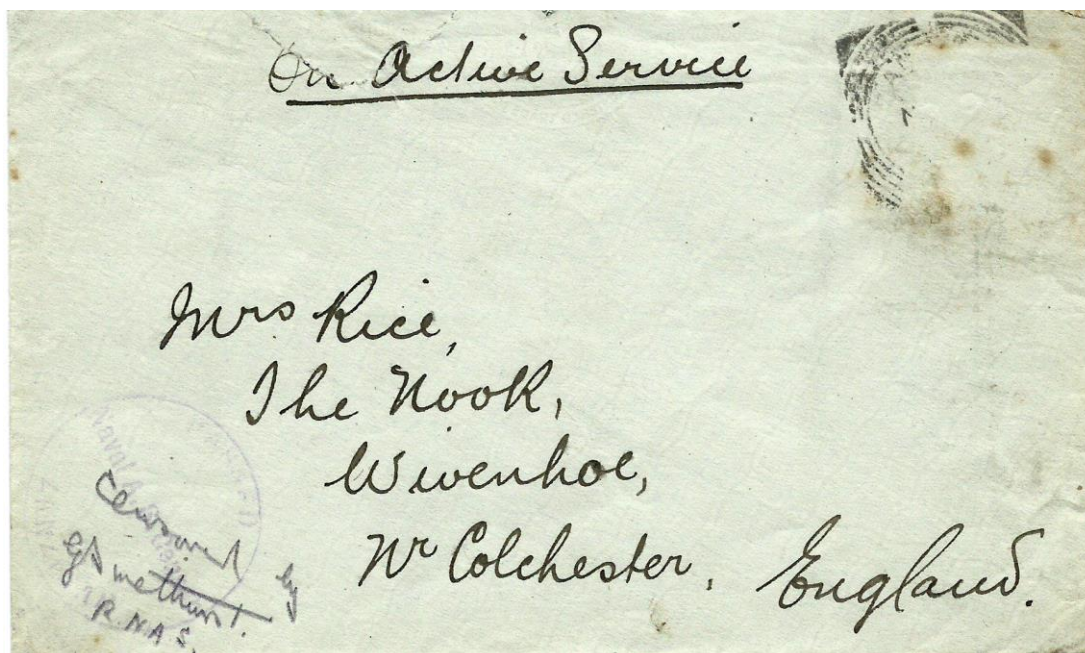


Figure: 18. A weak but fully struck mark **PASSED** / Naval A. S. Censor / **ZANZIBAR**.



Although undated (the adhesive and much of the cancellation has been removed), the cover can be placed into the 1916 – 1917 RNAS presence in Zanzibar by the censor, G Smethurst who is shown in 'Flight' magazine of 4 January 1917 as being promoted to Flight Lieutenant. Gould suggests the 'A' could stand for Air.

There is no doubt the conflict in East Africa provides great scope for the postal historian and story teller, as attendees at the joint meeting mentioned at the start of this article will have realised.

Nothing epitomises this more than the Battle of Lake Tanganyika, see the text after **Figure 4**. Who's for telling that story? Ed. This is planned for the Autumn Journal.

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End note

In 1924, John Ingle, the former captain of *Pegasus*, was tasked with clearing wrecks from the harbour in Dar es Salaam. At that time, he bought the salvage rights to *Königsberg* for the price of £200; he sent divers to extract non-ferrous scrap metal from the wreck and in turn sold the rights. Salvage work continued into the 1930s, and by the 1940s the hull had rolled over to her starboard side. As late as 1965, salvage work continued, but in 1966 the wreck collapsed and finally sank into the riverbed.

Three of the ship's 10.5 cm guns are preserved, one in Pretoria, South Africa, one in Jinja, Uganda, and one in Mombasa, along with a gun from *Pegasus*.

Feed Back

Comments on POW Camp Numbers

by Peter Burrows

I would like to comment on **Malcolm Sanders** article in **FPHS Journal #323. Page 179/182**

List 4 lists camp #111 as Harlow Camp, this may have been a working camp as the only item seen is dated January 1948

North Hill Camp #76 may be an error, as I have not recorded any mail from it.

When a camp was relocated, with all the prisoners and staff due to unsuitable site etc, it would have kept its number. This appears the case with #165 Kirkwall and Watten Camps.

When a camp changed from Italian to German working camp, it was not necessary to renumber it. Sometimes when a Base Camp was closed, its working camps would be transferred to a new Base Camp and used its number.

Le Marchant Camp #23 became a German working camp on 30 November 1945, and #410 a GWC date unknown. My database records mail from #23 December 1945 to August 1946, and #410 from May 1946 to February 1947, so it was possible that there was a new camp built next to the original camp.

The place names given in the early 1944 and revised July 1944 lists do not appear to exist, except for Halberry as there is a "Halberry Head" on the east coast of Scotland, an unlikely site for a camp.

There is still research needed to fill in the gaps in our listing.

Treatment of Ship's Bag Mail from China.

Graham Mark

I would like to comment on **Colin Tabear's** article in **FPHS Journal #323. Page 206/7**

I looked up the addressee of the cover:

The name is actually Lady Haycraft, she was the wife of Sir Thomas Wagstaffe Haycraft, a judge born 1858, knighted in 1919, served in Cyprus 1899-1911, later in Gibraltar, Mauritius, Grenada, and Chief Justice of Palestine 1921-27. Address per *Debretts* (1927 ed) Belstone Barton, near Okehampton.

They had one son:

Thomas Wagstaffe Richard Haycraft, born 1894, 2Lt RE 1Apr14, Lt 9Jun15, Capt 3Nov17, act Maj Oct18-Jan19, Maj 1Jan29. Served France & Belgium July-Sept15 and Jun17-Nov18, wounded, Despatches LG 21May18, he earned the 14-15 Star, War Medal & Vic Medal. All per *Half Yearly Army List* Jan1933.

I expect Portsmouth library may have later Half Yearly Army Lists which could identify his job 1938.

As a Royal Engineer he would not have the same turn of phrase as a submariner.

Feed Back – Queries

Query No 396 Navy Day by Edward Caesley

Phil Schreiber from New Jersey, U.S.A. has responded as follows.

NAVY DAY, Celebrated by the U.S. Navy since 1922, in recognition of the purchase of the first U.S. Navy ship on that day in 1775, also to honour the birthday of former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt who favoured a strong U.S. Navy.

I was a radioman in the crew of USS *LST 991* which also issued a Navy Day Commemorative postmark on that day. A few days earlier as we entered Hong Kong harbour we were greeted by the Royal Navy at anchor. HMS *Anson*, HMS *Indomitable* and their escorts dipped their flags, lined the rails in salute and invited us “To split the Main Brace” with them. A Truly unforgettable occasion.



Bryans Knights has also been in touch as follows,

The Spring Edition of the FPHS Journal has arrived and an impressive edition it is. Thank you. The Imperial Airways flying boats on page 207 brought back quite a few memories, firstly of the Maia and Mercury on the Medway in front of Shorts' factory which were sometimes seen from the bus on the way to school around 1939. Another seeing the flying boat mail service flights landing on the Waitemata waters of Auckland harbour in the late 1940s to early 1950s.

The article by Colin Tarbeat has been the prime reason for bursting into print. I must firstly declare that I only have a smattering of knowledge of R.N. affairs and am only passing on my thoughts of a possible route to the answer. I am curious to know if he has gone down this line “*Captain Barry is a dear and he and all his officers are giving me the best hospitality.*” That gives me the impression that the writer was a female. I presume that there were wives and nursing staff on the China station, there must have been some out there. I would imagine that ladies in such positions would, on occasions, be invited to certain events

on-board ship and ashore., and that such a person would also have access to Imperial Airways Officers, know the postage rates , as well as having the stamps to put on mail for transmission by the ship's bag.

I spent some time on passenger ships on the London to East Coast of South America trade, during the 1950s. I am aware of mail from ships under paquebot regulations and have always assumed that the local stamps were fixed by the ship's agents and received the local postmark but when on this trade it was possible to use UK air letter forms and post them on board. They usually received an etiquette of "Posted on the high seas" and sometimes the ship's name. Posting like this resulted in the queen's head being given, for example, the Santos postmark. Admittedly air letter forms are not collected by many but I have never seen anything on this subject and would like to know if any members have knowledge on the matter. It was general knowledge to those engaged on this trade that letters posted in Brazil often disappeared, so many people registered their mail, or resorted to this system which was only used outward bound as the vessel was normally home before or very soon after mail going through the normal postal route.

It is easy to see how people get involved in various aspects of mail. Having just commented on ships' bags I started to wonder when they came into use. That must have been after steam had become a reliable source of power for vessels and are possibly no longer in existence seeing the reliability of aircraft and their speed combined with other means of communication now in use.



<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17126434>

Image from a contemporary newspaper article, depicting *Mercury* atop *Maia* 1938. Ed.

Query No 396 - Part Two - Moscar Egypt. Edward Caesley

By John Davis

I'm sorry I cannot help with the first part of your query, but the second part is meat and drink to me as I just collect Egypt. Sadly I can't say which unit of the British Army was stationed at Moascar in 1934 but I can give the background. In 1932 Egypt increased the cost of posting a letter home from ten milliemes to fifteen, and troops massed in the Western Desert of Egypt (i.e. to the West of the River Nile) facing the threat of Mussolini's Italian troops who had taken next door Libya, complained bitterly. As a result the Egyptian Postal Administration agreed to reduce the postage fee for military personnel back to ten milliemes, and were compensated for so doing with £10,000 initially followed by a further £6,000 in 1933. An agreement to that effect was included in the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 signed for Britain by foreign secretary Anthony Eden.

As part of the agreement, a copy of which is shown in Figure;1. The so-called N.A.A.F.I. seals were issued and had to be stuck on the backs of covers to be cancelled with a "retta" hand-stamp in the form of a lozenge of dots, and a military post office cancellation was to be struck on the front. Incidentally your cover breaks the rules in that the M.P.O. date-stamp is struck across the letter stamp, one of the successors to the N.A.A.F.I. seal.

A series of red, sometimes black or blue-black, or occasionally purple, 'Prepaid' cancels was struck on the front and included a number from 1 to 25 distributed among the various British Bases in Egypt. These are known as Crown Cancels or Numeral Franks and No. 4 was initially allocated to M.P.O. Cairo to be transferred to Moascar some-time in 1933. Initially Moascar was allocated Nos. 1,3,7 and 8. When the Egyptian Postal Administration sent their missive about this to the Universal Postal Union, Crown Cancel No.7, oddly enough from Moascar, where it was allegedly dropped down a well and lost could not be included.

The 'stamp' on the back of your cover is a Letter Stamp of which there are four types following on from the N.A.A.F.I. seals as follows.

<u>Date</u>	<u>SG No.</u>	<u>Colour or shade</u>	<u>Perforations</u>
1 June 1934	A7	Bright Carmine	14.5 x 14
5 December 1934	A8	Green	14.5 x 14
24 April 1935	A9	Bright Carmine	14 (First Comb issue)
21 December 1935	A9	Pale Carmine	14 (Second Comb)

Note, Gibbons does not differentiate between the two latter stamps.

I do hope this answers most of your questions on the subject but should you require more information, there is a copy of Parts I and II of my book in the FPHS Library. Part III will hopefully be available in July.

All covers were addressed to a Miss Mary Lloyd, The Buchan School, Castletown, Isle of Man and a letter accompanying the 24 covers was sent and signed by General Sir John T. Burnett-Stuart K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G., D.S.O. from H.Q. British Troops in Egypt, Cairo.

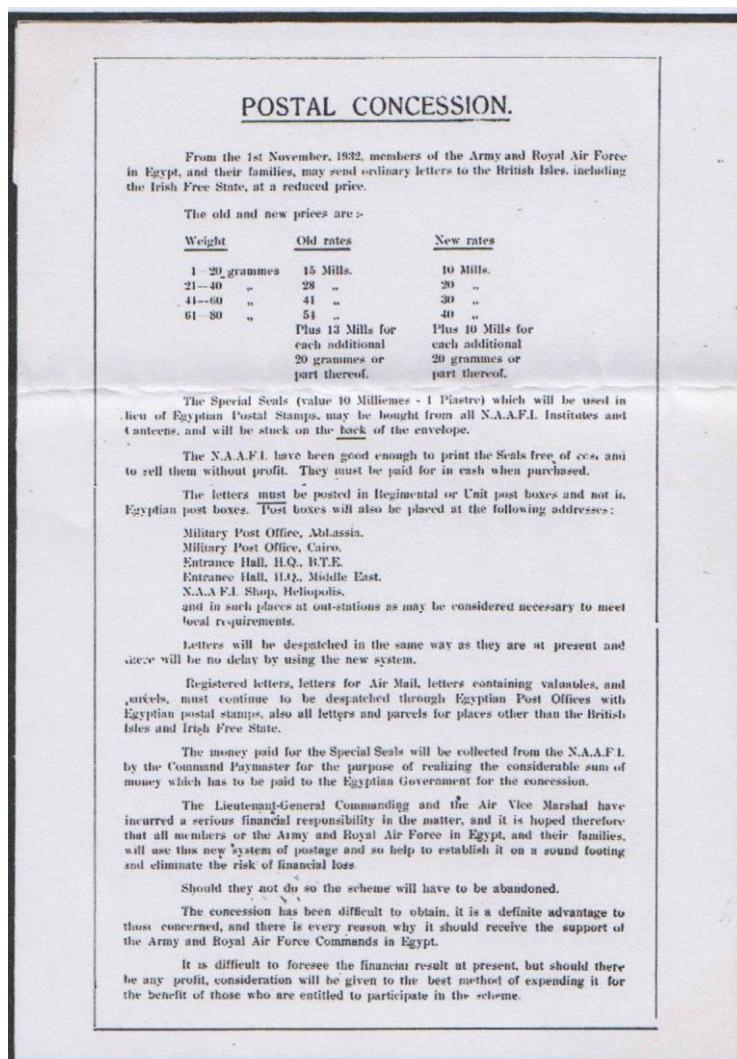


Figure:1. Facsimile (70%) of N.A.A.F.I. poster of Concession 1932 – 36

Reference

Davis, John. Egypt. The Postal Concession for British Forces 1932-1956

Query No 397 Andrew Pavey -Mystery Card from Romania

Despite highlighting this query on the Forum no further information is forthcoming.

I'd suspect a medical connection possibly a civilian with one of the aid and relief organisations operating there at the time. Ed

Post Office Numbers Allocated to British Army Camps in World War I

Patrick Frost

Many new Post Offices were opened at army camps during World War One, and some of these were sufficiently large that it was deemed necessary to issue them with charge marks for use on postage due mail.

Post Office numbers were no longer used in cancellations by 1915, and only a very few offices continued to use duplex or numeral obliterator cancels by then. However, numbers were still used in Post Office charge marks, and new numbers therefore had to be issued to new Post Offices supplied with postage due handstamps.

I have examples of eleven different Post Office numbers which were reallocated to new Post Offices at army camps between 1915 and 1919. All these numbers were previously used at other offices, in several cases at British Post Offices abroad, but were no longer used by 1906.

Most of these charge marks simply have the number below the charge (type 1 - see **figure: 1**). In 1918 new charge marks were introduced with “**TO PAY**” below the charge, the Post Office number in a third line below “**TO PAY**” (type 2 - see **figure: 2**).

The following list shows the numbers recorded by me with their place of use, and the value, type and date of use of charge marks seen.

		Type 1		Type 2	
385	Halton Camp, Bucks	1d	24/10/15	3d	13/11/22
		2d	27/9/17		
426	Kinmel Park Camp, Rhyl			1d	4/9/19
909	Witley Camp, Godalming	½d	23-25/8/15		
		1d	18/4/16		
A.01	Prees Heath Camp, Whitchurch	½d	14/8/18		
		2d	21/11/16		
A.02	Codford Camp, Wilts	1d	22/9/17-19/2/20	1½d	18/11/18
		2d	23/2/18		
A.03	Sutton Veny Camp, Wilts	1d	16/2/16-28/6/16		
A04	Park Hall Camp, Oswestry	1d	13/7/16		
A.05	Bulford Camp, Salisbury	2d	9/2/16-29/12/20		
A.06	Tidworth Camp, Hants	1d	19/2/17		
A.07	Catterick Camp, Yorkshire	1d	19/9/17		
B.01	Bramshott Camp	1d	28/7/15-11/4/16		

Numbers preceded by a letter have a dot after the letter, thus “A.01”, however the Catterick handstamp reads “A.0.7 and the second type 1½d handstamp of Codford “A.0.2”, both an error in the manufacture.

Unlike all the other camps shown here Codford never had a camp cancel, although it was a substantial camp and I have seen postcards of the Army Post Office staff. The New Zealand army had their own Post Office at the camp, using the datestamp “NEW ZEALAND / No. 5 / STA. POST OFFICE”, whilst other mail from the camp received the datestamp of the local village post office at Codford St. Mary. I have six examples of A.02 charge marks, three posted in 1918 cancelled at the N.Z No. 5 Post Office, two at Codford St. Mary, and one without a

postmark. Was this "A.02" number used at the Camp Post Office or the village office of Codford St. Mary? If the latter it would be the only WWI reallocated number not specifically used at a Camp P.O., though the village Post Office seems to have handled all camp mail other than that from the New Zealand Post Office, and military mail must have accounted for a very large percentage of all mail cancelled at Codford in World War One. Further evidence that this is indeed the case appears in the 1924 list of Post Office numbers, which shows "A.02" allocated to Codford St Mary some five years after Codford Camp ceased to exist.

The Australians also had their own army Post Offices at some British camps, and the "A.06" cover I have is cancelled "A.I.F. CAMP P.O. / 1".

Most army camps closed shortly after the end of the war, in 1919 or 1920. The 1924 list of Post Office numbers shows just two numbers still in use, "385" at Halton Camp and "A.02" at Codford, with the Post Office at Bulford Camp then using number "142". Why was Bulford Camp reallocated with yet another number after the war?

I have been unable to find any official notice concerning the reallocation of new Post Office numbers in World War One. If anyone has such a document or can provide details of further numbers allocated to camps, I would welcome the information.

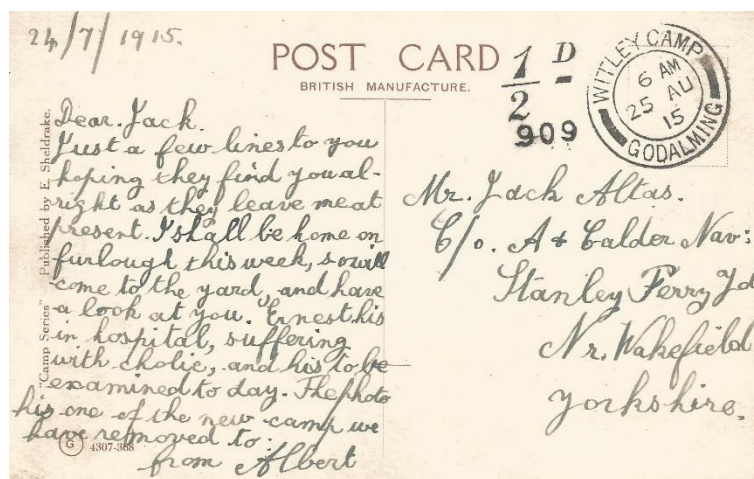
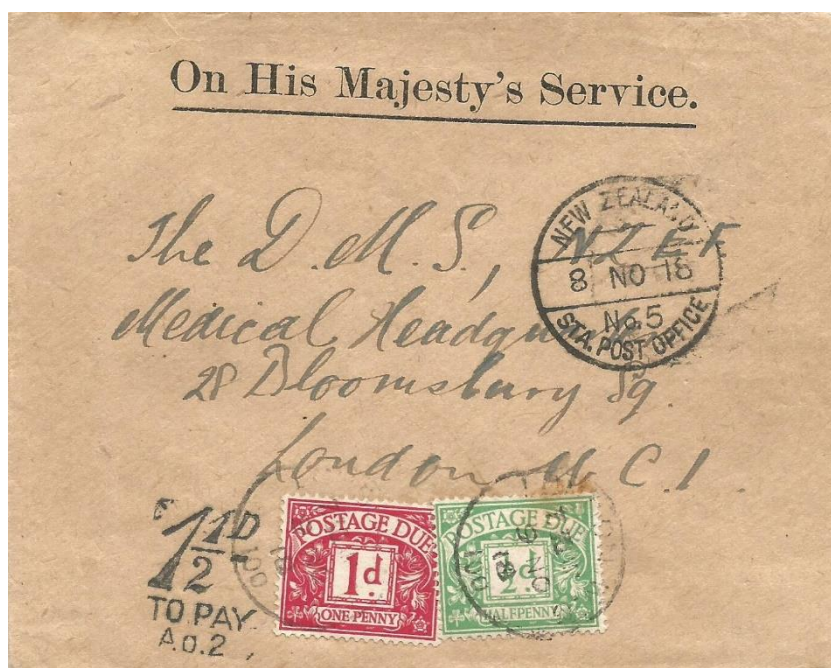


Figure: 1.

Figure: 2.



British Naval Liaison Officer, Dakar, 1940

Nick Colley

Shown here are two items addressed to Commander Garland, RN in 1940. The first (**Figure: 1**) is from the UK, postmarked on 30th March 1940, franked 1/3d for air mail to HMS *Albatross*. This has been redirected to him c/o the BNLO, Dakar, where he received it on 10th April – cachet on the reverse, **Figure: 2**.

Commander Garland had been appointed to HMS *Albatross* with effect from (wef) 1st August 1939. *Albatross* was a seaplane carrier with the Australian navy, transferred to the RN in the UK in September 1938. She took passage to her designated war station, Freetown, Sierra Leone, in the autumn of 1939, from where she provided air reconnaissance for trade defence and

interception of blockade runners and commerce raiders.



Figure: 1.

She also visited Bathurst and Dakar. The subsequent posting of Commander Garland (wef 5th April) to be the BNLO with the French Navy at Dakar is therefore explained. He appears to have been accommodated aboard the battleship *Provence*.

HMS *Albatross*

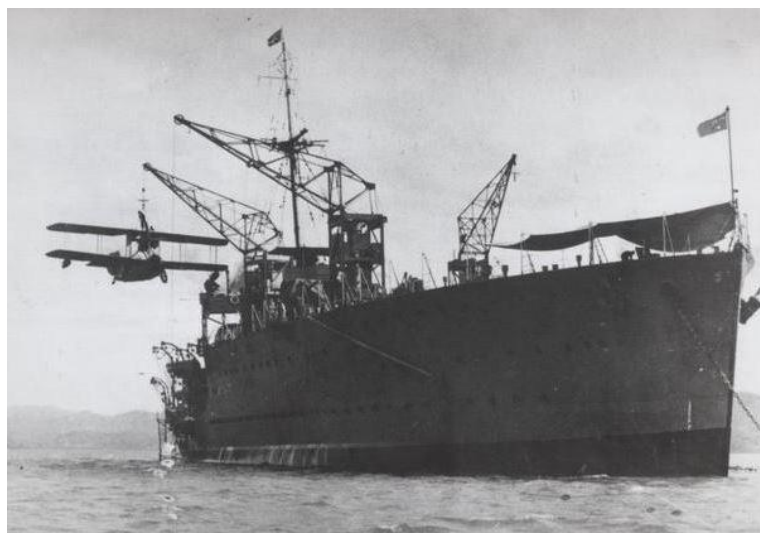


Figure: 2.

However, according to

Reference 1, *Provence* and a number of other French warships left Dakar for Oran, Alexandria, and then back to Oran (Mers-el-Kebir) on 11th April and did not subsequently return. She was sunk, but not destroyed, by the British Force H on 4th July (she was later re-floated).

The second cover, **Figure: 3**, is therefore hard to explain if it is taken at face value. Addressed to Garland on board the *Provence*, it was posted from Plymouth on 1st June 1940, presumably with British stamps. It has clearly been handled by the French postal service, receiving a Paris postmark on 3rd June. There are signs the British stamps have been removed (see indicated area in **Figure: 4**) and replaced by the 1Fr French stamp, which overlies the Post Early in the Day slogan. It has received the BNLO Dakar cachet on 6th June 1940.



Figure:3.



Figure: 4.

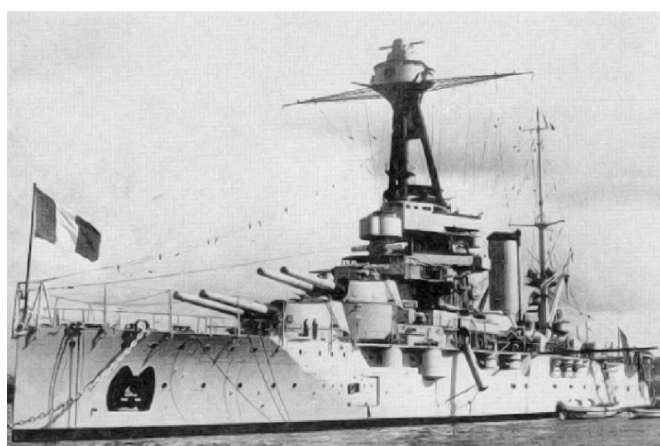


Figure: 5. The *Provence*

One or two observations come to mind.

1. the rapidity of the transit from Plymouth through France to the addressee at this time is remarkable: the Dunkirk evacuation was underway, nearing the end, and French forces were collapsing. Yet the French postal service appears to have been functioning perfectly normally; 2. Why were the

British stamp(s) removed, and who paid for the French stamp? 3. *Provence* had been back at Mers-el-Kebir since late May, so, if Garland was still aboard (which he clearly was), why was 'DAKAR' still retained in his cachet as late as 6th June? Presumably, given the prevailing circumstances, he had more important matters to attend to. Somehow, Garland returned to the UK, and was assigned to the Naval Intelligence Division at the Admiralty.

Reference. 1: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_battleship_Provence#World_War_II

Query : 399

John Scott

Hi Chris, Hope that you are surviving the virus - the only saving grace is that we have plenty to occupy ourselves!

I could not find the censor mark on the attached postcard in Michael Gould's book and so I felt that it might be useful query for a future Journal:

The image on the postcard is a standard Daily Mail sanitized picture of Red Cross Ambulances stationed near the front line. The message is written in pencil and addressed to Brixton but the boxed 'Passed by Censor / R.N.A.S: S.' does not appear to be listed by Michael Gould and

I wondered if any member could fill in the two missing letters.

The message reads: "Dearest Dora, No doubt you will be surprised to hear that I have had another touch of fever which has kept me in bed for the past four days but I am pleased to say that I am feeling much better now & tomorrow I shall be on the briney on my way to hospital for a change of air and a rest which I hope will make me feel more fit than I have in the past few weeks. Will write to you again in a few days' time. Love Willie"

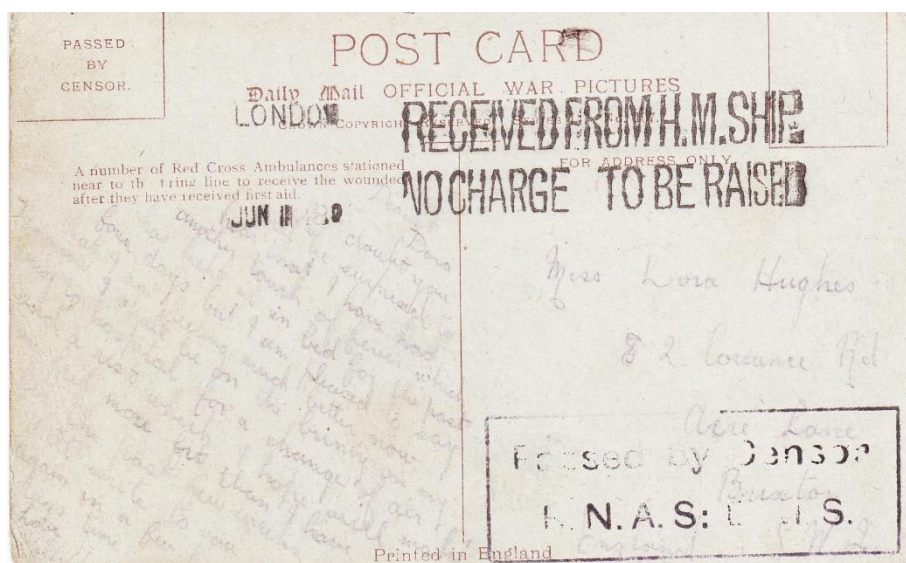
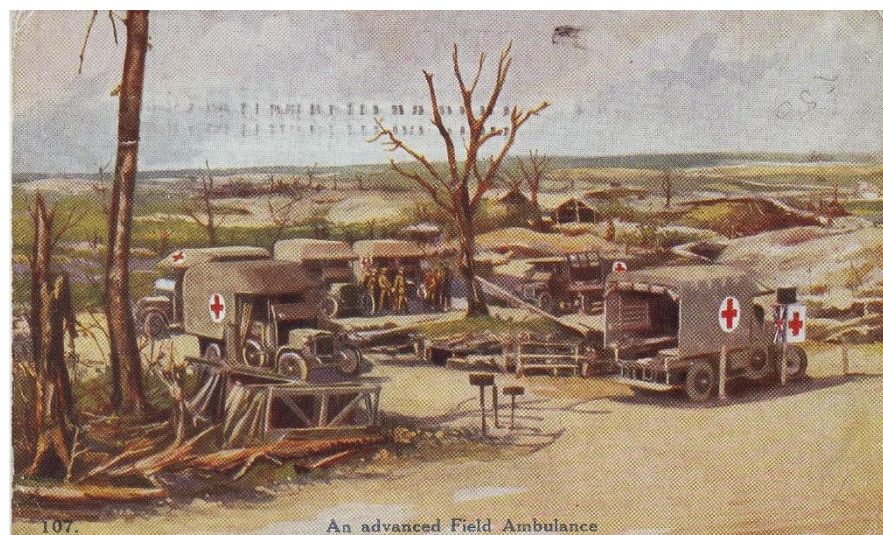


Figure: 1.

Figure: 2.

The Daily Mail published a large number of 'Official Post Cards' during WWI. Ed



An American Soldier in Peking

Howard L. Weinert

Manus MacCloskey, born in Pittsburgh in 1874, graduated from West Point in 1898 and served in Cuba and the Philippines with Light Battery F, 5th US Artillery. In July 1900 that unit and other American troops, about 2000 in all, were sent to China as part of an international expedition to suppress the Boxer Rebellion. He commanded one of the battery's three platoons (2 guns each). The battery entered Peking on 14 August and bombarded the walls of the Imperial city. On the next day, MacCloskey was promoted to First Lieutenant and assigned to the 7th US Artillery. He returned to the USA in June 1901, and in 1902 became the first commander of Fort Worden on the Puget Sound.

He served with distinction in France during World War I, attaining the rank of Brigadier General in 1918. He retired from the Army in 1938 and was Administrator of Cook County Hospital in Chicago from then until 1947. He died in 1963 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Here is a cover sent to his fiancée in Pittsburgh. It was postmarked **MIL POSTAL STA No.1 CHINA** on 11 and 14 January 1901, and was received in Pittsburgh in March.



Figure: 1.



Figure:2.
Reverse of
Cover



Figure: 3.
MacCloskey at West Point



Figure: 4. 5th US Artillery firing on Peking 14 August 1900



Figure: 5. Arlington National Cemetery

The following 5 pages are compiled from recent “Covers of the Day” postings made on the Forum, I’ve tried to pick a representative selection and would encourage all members who are able to log on and hopefully contribute to what is an important part of the society certainly in these troubled times. Ed

The first American casualty of the Japanese:

Howard L. Weinert

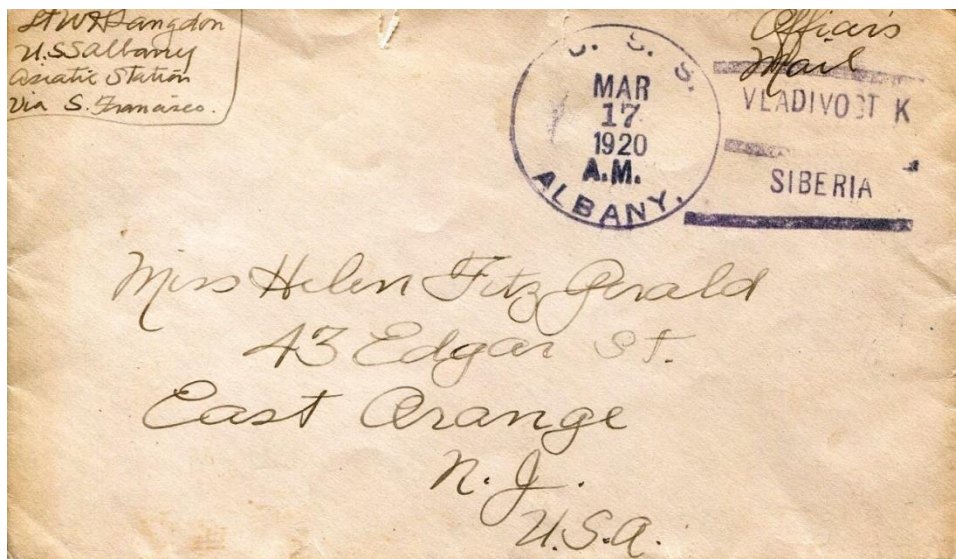
A cover with enclosed letter sent to East Orange, New Jersey by Lt. Warren Hector Langdon [1888-1921], chief engineer on the USS Albany in Vladivostok. Postmarked U. S. S. Albany Vladivostok Siberia on 17 March 1920. Inscribed “Lt. W. H. Langdon, U. S. S. Albany, Asiatic Station, via S. Francisco” and “Officer’s Mail.” On 7 January 1921, Langdon went ashore to a Russian Christmas party. The festivities lasted well into the next day and Langdon, in uniform, made his way back toward his ship with the aid of a flashlight. When he was near the headquarters of the Japanese occupation force, a sentry ordered him to halt and identify himself, which he did, and then proceeded on his way. The sentry fired his rifle and a bullet hit Langdon in the back, piercing a lung and exiting through his chest. Langdon returned fire with his pistol, then made his way back to the ship. Before dying on the 9th, he gave a full account of what had happened. Americans in Siberia were often harassed by the Japanese, but Langdon was the first American serviceman to be killed by a Japanese soldier, two decades before Pearl Harbour. At first, the sentry who shot Langdon insisted that Langdon had not stopped when challenged and had in fact fired his weapon first. A few days later he changed his story and agreed with Langdon’s account except to say that his rifle discharged accidentally. An American court of inquiry completely absolved Langdon of any wrongdoing. The Japanese accepted responsibility for the event but refused to punish the sentry for the killing, saying that his orders were improper. They did sentence him to 30 days confinement for making false statements. His superior officers took the brunt of the punishment. The commander of the Japanese garrison was removed from the active list and four subordinate officers were sentenced to house arrest for 7 to 30 days. These actions took place within six weeks of Langdon’s death, but the issue of reparations for Langdon’s parents dragged on. In March 1923 the Secretary of State asked his ambassador in Tokyo to propose a \$40,000 reparation. Thirteen months later, the Japanese countered with an offer of \$15,000, and that amount was paid to Langdon’s parents in July 1924.

Excerpts from the letter:

“We have been in this place since Dec. 19, 1919. Since the capture of the town by the Reds, or Constitutionals as they call themselves, everything has been very quiet. We very seldom hear any shooting and very few murders occur. There were numerous suicides right after the place was captured but they were principally officers of the old Russian army and their wives. There has been any amount of sickness here and typhus, smallpox, scarlet and typhoid fevers, flu, pneumonia and some cholera have claimed countless numbers of the Chinese coolies and Russian peasants. It is difficult to imagine the filth and poverty that this place abounds in. I have seen lots of dirt and filth but this place beats them all. I am mighty glad that all our troops will be out of here about May 1st, both for their sakes and the future of Russia. I have spent the winter in Siberia and have not seen three inches of snow in all that time.

Tonight I am invited out to dinner and a private movie, so far very good, but I am the only English speaking person in the party and having met the young lady I am to take to dinner, I

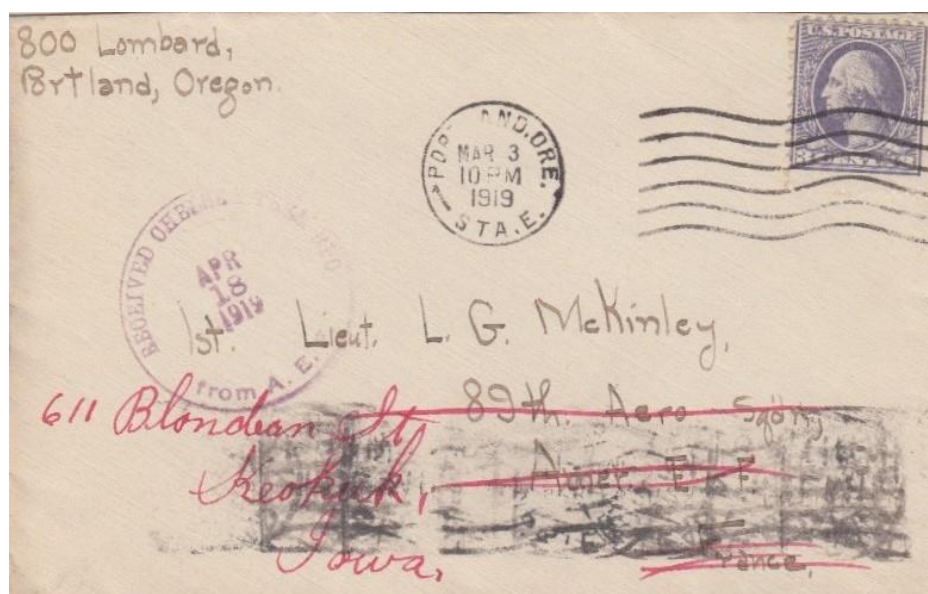
admit I'll have to speak Russian for this is going to be no time to keep quiet. Just imagine the horrible hashing up the poor Russian lingo is going to get tonight."



89th United. States. Aero Squadron Peter Harvey

A plain cover cancelled and mailed with machine PORTLAND MAR 3 1919 date stamp to the 89th Aero Sqn Amer E.F France. At this time the Sqn along with the 88th Aero Sqn was being disbanded and left France in June. The cover has been returned to the U.S. with the cachet RECEIVED CHELSEA TERM BPO From A.E.F. dated Apr 18 and reverse shows HEMPSTEAD N.Y. Mill Branch Apr 23 date stamp.

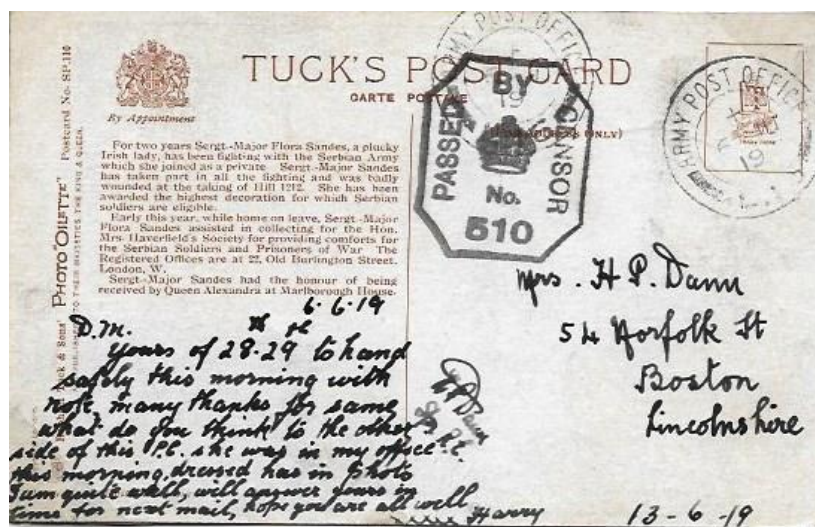
The squadron was first activated as the 89th Aero Squadron at Kelly Field, Texas during World War I. It deployed to France in 1917, where it constructed airfields and trained observers. In 1918 it briefly trained as an observation unit, but the unit did not move to the front before the Armistice. After the German surrender it served with the 4th Corps Observation Group (Third Army) at Trier Aerodrome.



Army Post Office L 16 Frank Schofield

Sgt/Major Flora Sandes, the only British woman in the Serbian Army.

With the arrival of the five British Divisions in Italy in November 1917, a new series of Army Post Office 'L' date stamps were sent out in December 1917, numbers L1 - L12 (except L10) were issued to various stationary offices in Italy, L13 went to Modane on the French/Italian border, L14, L15 and L16 were held in reserve at GHQ, Italy, they came into use early 1919, L14 (Fiume, Yugoslavia), L15 (Venice, Italy) and L16 (Belgrade, Yugoslavia).



This postcard, sent home by Sapper Harry Dann of the Royal Engineers, postmarked Army Post Office L16 on 6th June 1919, states "she was in my office this morning, dressed has in the photo"

Flora Sandes went out to Serbia with a St. Johns Ambulance Unit and later joined the Serbian Red Cross, she became separated from her unit and joined the retreating Serbian Army, was wounded by a grenade, highly decorated and promoted to Sgt/Major. In 1927 she married a former White Army General. During WWII she and her husband were interned for a short while by the invading Germans, her husband died in 1941. After returning to England, she died in Suffolk in 1956 at the age of 80.

The full story of this
on Wikipedia.

remarkable woman is available



Detained in France 1940

Jim Etherington

This cover had an interesting journey with an unexplained interlude. Sent from Margate, where the 2nd Echelon BEF was based, on 7 May 1940 to Major A E Taylor Royal Tank Regt., No 1(?) General Hospital, it was redirected to No 7 General Hospital (possibly on 10 May – manuscript addition). Back-stamped with FPO 37 (18 May 1940), Army Post Office (19 May 1940) cancels it was returned to the UK (London SW1 - 29 May 1940)



The next dated cancel is Home Post Centre ? May 1945 where presumably the 'DETAINED IN FRANCE / DURING GERMAN / OCCUPATION' cachet was applied. Detained mail was returned to the UK from Paris during April-May 1945.



It was then forwarded to DDMS (Deputy Director of Medical Services), British Troops in Egypt, the cover being back-stamped with a FPO 76 receiving office dated 18 May 1945. As a consequence of Taylor not being found, the cover was returned to the UK (London SW1 1 June 1945), with 'Not known M Branch BTE (British Troops Egypt) 18/5/45' affixed. Presumably it was then forwarded to Weston Super Mare, but there are no postal markings to confirm this.

How did this cover come to be in the French civilian postal service and end up in the vault of the Paris Post Office for the duration of the war, having apparently been returned the UK by 29 May 1940? Any thoughts?

Field Post Office 1033 – Australia

Mike Dobbs

A very attractive cover commemorating the Apollo 16 Moon Landing on 21 April 1972 - cancelled with FIELD POST OFFICE 1033 on 21 AP 72. What makes this even more attractive is that it has the cachet of the postal unit which ran the FPO - **370 Postal & Courier Communications Unit RE**. This was at BFPO 151 - RAAF Station Edinburgh Field, Adelaide, South Australia, hence also the B.F.P.O. ADELAIDE cachet. A very nice item and one which I have not seen before.



French Naval Vessel D'IPERVILLE

Chris Weddell

This cover was posted from aboard the French Navy Aviso (medium sized battleship used in the Colonies) "D'IPERVILLE" which was in Port Said, Egypt.



The cover was posted on the 2nd of November 1939 before their surrender to Germany in 1940. She then served with the Vichy French Navy. On the 27th of November 1942 she was scuttled with other ships of the French fleet at Toulon.

British military presence in Swaziland before independence

Marc Parren

Introduction

In 1903, after British victory in the Anglo-Boer war, Swaziland became a British protectorate. In the early years of indirect rule, the British expected that Swaziland would eventually be incorporated into South Africa. After the Second World War, however, South Africa's intensification of racial discrimination induced the United Kingdom to prepare Swaziland for complete independence. By 1960 British initiative occasioned the formation of a number of political parties. Following a general strike in 1963, in support of quicker institutional advance, the 1st Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders and certain supporting sub-units arrived between 13 and 18 June 1963 in Swaziland as they were moved from Kenya. Police soon quelled the unrest. For a more detailed account of what happened in June 1963 see van der Molen (2004). A rotating garrison of British troops would remain in Swaziland until November 1966.

Postal implications

The administration of the British troops stationed in Swaziland was controlled by the British Army Training & Liaison Staff Kenya based in Nairobi. Postal support was provided by a detachment from the BFPO 10 at Nairobi. The postal address of the operations in Swaziland was BFPO 640 and the FPOs recorded are presented in Table 1. At this time it was practice for FPO datestamps to be changed periodically. Each army unit would include a postal detachment, which would have drawn a FPO datestamp for the duration of the unit's assignment. When the army unit was replaced they would return their datestamp to BFPO stock. The replacing unit would draw another numbered FPO datestamp, so in case of a gradual replacement of a unit more than one FPO datestamp could be in use at the same time. We also see that as from June 1964 the British troops were stationed in the newly built St. George's Barracks in Matsapa.

Table 1. Field Post Offices in use in Swaziland between June 1963 and November 1966. Based on Kennedy (2003), van der Molen (2004), Ransom (2020).

Tour	1 st Battalion of Regiment	Arrived	Departed	FPO No.	Earliest date	Latest date	Location	Remarks
1	The Gordon Highlanders	13 – 16 Jun 63	2 - 30 Aug 63	656	13 Jun 63	15 Oct 63	Mbabane	with a field hospital
2	The Loyal Regiment	from 28 Jul 63	20 Nov – 3 Dec 63					from Cyprus
3	The York & Lancaster Regiment	20 – 30 Nov 63	from 10 Oct 64	1041	13 Dec 63	06 Apr 64	Mbabane	Fig. 1.
				997	01 July 64	Dec 64	Matsapa	Fig. 2
4	The Lancashire Regiment	from 9 Oct 64	from 9 Jul 65	947	27 Nov 64	15 Mar 65	Matsapa	
5	The Gloucestershire Regiment	from 24 Jul 65	from 26 Mar 66	124	26 Apr 65	09 Feb 66	Matsapa	Fig. 3

6	The Royal Irish Fusiliers	from 24 Mar 66	25 – 30 Nov 66	1019	13 May 66	18 Nov 66	Matsapa	Fig. 4
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Figure: 1. Viewcard sent by a Signals member of the Havlock Detachment of the York & Lancaster Regiment cancelled 10 March 1964 FPO 1041. Ex-collection Alistair Kennedy.

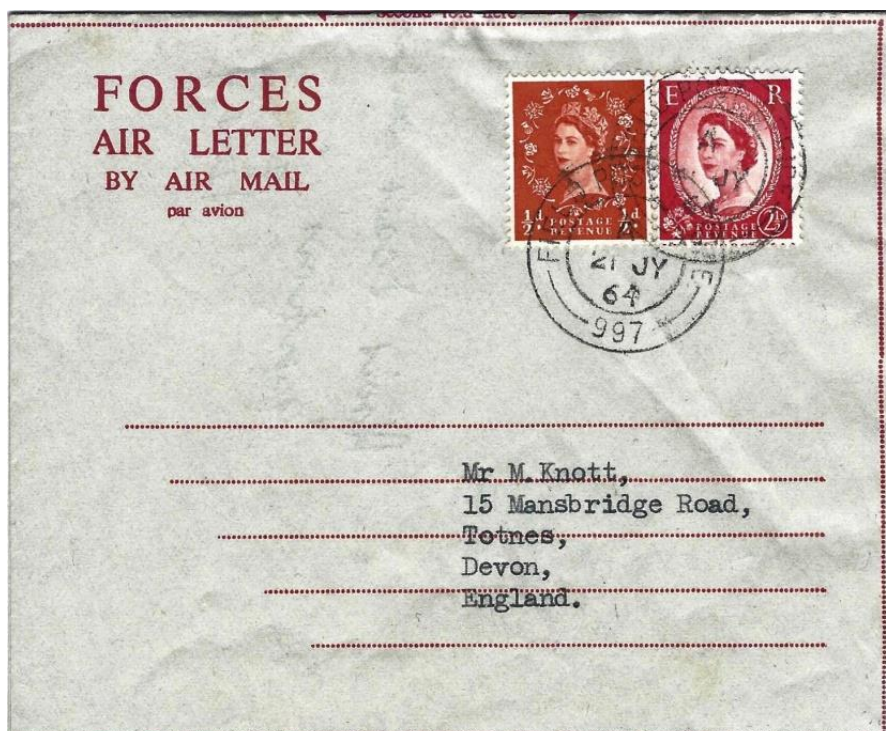


Figure: 2.

Forces air letter sent by a member of the York & Lancaster Regiment cancelled 21 July 1964 FPO 997.

Ex-collection Alistair Kennedy.

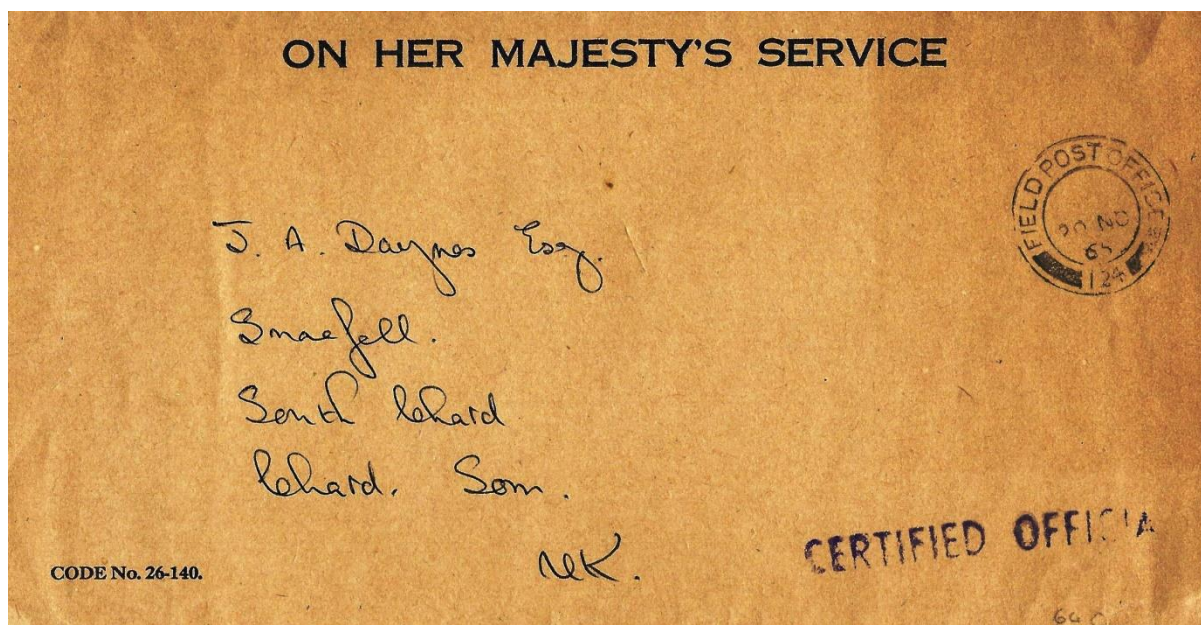


Figure: 3. Unfranked OHMS cover sent by a member of the Gloucestershire Regiment cancelled 20 November 1965 FPO 124. Ex-collection Alistair Kennedy.



Figure: 4.

Cover sent by a member of the Royal Irish Fusiliers cancelled 8 August 1966 FPO 1019.

Ex-collection Alistair Kennedy

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Brian Trotter for helping me obtain a copy of the article by P.W. van der Molen.

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Use of The Type 7 Censor Hand-stamps No's 400 – 560. 1917-1920

Chris Grimshaw

Use of these later numbers in the Type 7 series is scarce and under researched. The series allocated went up to No 700, No use has been recorded above No 560 however. This article sets out what has currently been recorded and where known allocated to unit or user. Other numbers undoubtedly exist and I welcome details.

Table showing what is currently known.

No	Details		FPO / APO	FPO / APO
400	Not seen			
401	Unallocated by FD		APO RX 16	
402	Unallocated by FD		FPO H 16	
403	Unallocated by FD		APO SX 22	
405			FPO W 2	
405			APO SX 6	
407			FPO W 2	
408	281 Company, Motor Transport, Army Service Corps		FPO W 2	
409			APO SX 4	
410			APO SX 10	
414			FPO W 2	FPO W 4
418*	Unallocated		APO SX 4	
419			APO SX 2	
420			APO SX 12	
424			APO SX 2	
432	3 rd Battalion Royal Marines Mudros		APO SX 3	
436			APO SX 13	
439	Unallocated by FD		FPO 84	FPO 228
440	Unallocated by FD		APO RX 16	
447			APO SX 10	APO SX 12
449			APO SX 10	
450			FPO T 26	
451			FPO 67	
452			APO SX 15	
454	Allocated to 82 nd General Hospital		FPO 83	APO SX 13
455*	Allocated to Staff of 82 nd General Hospital		APO SX 15	
455	Allocated to Staff of 82 nd General Hospital		FPO H 12	
459	Allocated to 445 th Siege Battery RGA		APO Y	
463			APO RX 16	FPO MX 1
463	Unallocated		APO R 22	
465	Allocated to Base Commandant Batoum		FPO 80	
466			Base APO X	
469	1/2 nd Rajput Light Infantry		FPO T 22	
470	Allocated to 24 th Punjabis		FPO 84	
473	Allocated to 6 th Garrison Battn Royal Welsh Fusiliers		APO SX 9	

474	Recorded on Mail Ex Air Mail Service from Sofia		APO SX 5	
474	Allocated to The British Military Mission Bulgaria		APO SX 21	
475			Base APO X	
478	Allocated to 6 th Garrison Battn Royal Welsh Fusiliers		APO SX 9	
479			APO SX 1	
483	Allocated to Town Commandant Varna		FPO T 26	
487	Allocated to 1/25 th Punjabis		APO SX 1	
489	Allocated to Interpreter Headquarters GHQ	(Solly F F)		
491			FPO H 12	
509			APO L 16	
510			APO L 16	
536	Allocated to 40 th Company Field Ambulance			
549	Civil Mail	Persia		
550	Civil Mail			
551				
552				
553				
554				
555*	Unallocated	Persia	IFPO 76	
556				
557				
558	Civil Mail	Persia		
559	Civil Mail	Persia		
560	Civil Mail	Persia		

The above table shows what I currently record with user where known. Frank Daniel was first to undertake studies and recorded what he's seen or was reported to him. John Slingsby further recorded the censor numbers where he'd identified the user. John's collection contained further material where the user was unidentified. These items are reflected in the above listing. To keep the size of the listing down unseen numbers are not shown.

It's likely that as units were disbanded the censor hand-stamps were reallocated. Where a censor number is recorded by multiple FPO/APOs this is shown.



Censor No **555** IFPO No 76 9th August 1919

Located at
Baku.
Signature
unidentified

